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THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

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THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

A HISTORY OF WESTERN EUROPE

1254–1494

BY

R. B. MOWAT, M.A.

FELLOW AND ASSISTANT TUTOR, CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE
OXFORD

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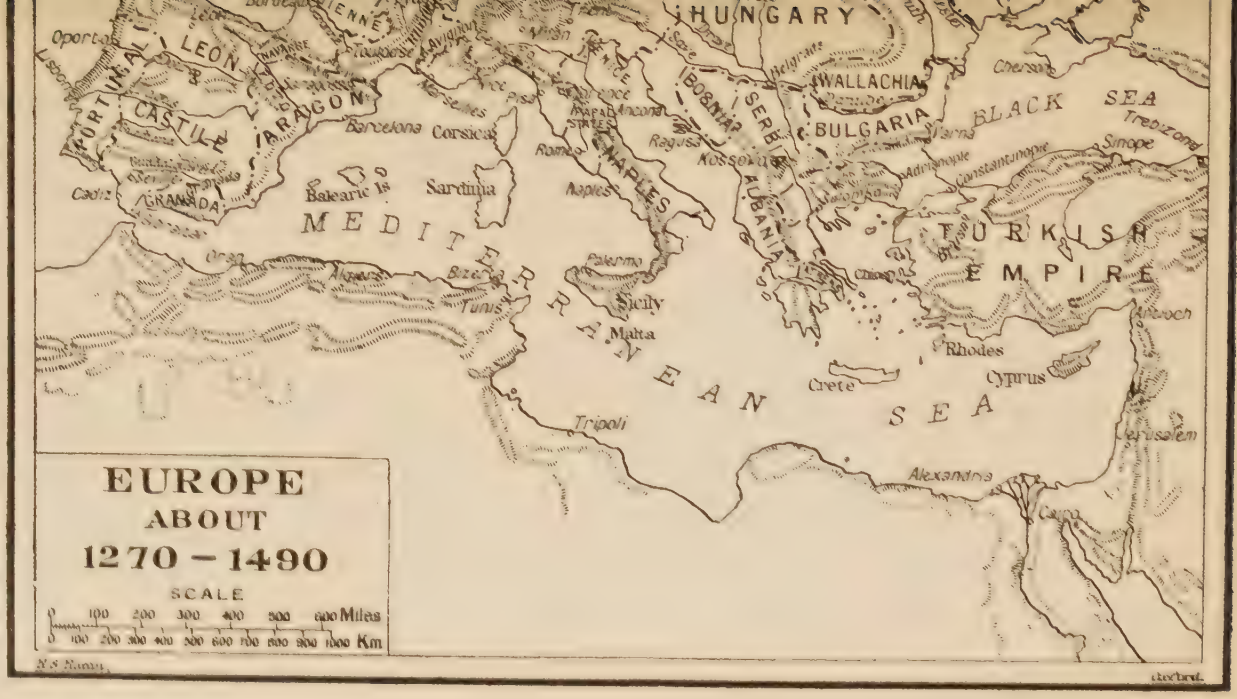
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MEDITERRANEAN SEA

E voi, che il rabido
Rogo non strusse,
Voci fatidiche,
Wicleff ed Husse,

A l'aura il vigile
Grido mandate:
S'innova il secolo,
Piena è l'etate.

CARDUCCI.

CHAPTER I

GERMANY FROM THE DEATH OF CONRAD IV TO THE ACCESSION OF HENRY OF LUXEMBURG

When the Emperor Conrad IV died in 1254 the Papacy had won its great struggle against the Empire. The defeat of the secular power brought with it the loss of national unity in Italy and Germany. The other countries of Europe had kept out of the struggle of Empire and Papacy, therefore the course of their history was scarcely affected by it.

Germany.

When this period opens one of the finest epochs in German history had just closed, and a time of confusion begun. Under the Hohenstaufen emperors the German people had shown great activity and intellectual development. Literature had flourished with the *Nibelungen* epics and with the beautiful songs of the *Minnesinger*, law had developed with the codes of the *Sachsenspiegel* and *Schwabenspiegel*, and the great monasteries had carried on their studies, more especially in the regions of history. But with the death of Frederick II the disturbance of Germany's political life, which had been apparent even before this event took place, became so acute that the country lost the eminent place which it had held in the civilization of Europe, a place which it was not to recover for over five hundred years.

The Princes.

When the Empire fell in Germany its power was shared out among the princes and the cities. The

princes were the feudal lords, who were both great officials of the Emperor and holders of lands from him. Their titles of Duke, Count, or Margrave (Herzog, Graf, Markgraf) referred, strictly speaking, only to their official positions, as administrators of certain districts under the Emperor. These positions and titles had never been made legally hereditary. The estates or *fiefs* of the princes and nobles, on the other hand, had been recognized as legally hereditary for over a hundred years. But, after the fall of the Hohenstaufen dynasty in Germany, the official positions as well as the estates of princes were treated as being hereditary. Each prince, therefore, secure in the possession of his Duchy, Countship, or Margravate, with all the military and judicial rights which such a position carried with it over the administrative area, was practically a sovereign. He ruled his Duchy or County like a king; Germany became a land of many states. Even nobles of only moderate means, knights who held their little fiefs directly from the Emperor and had no other lord, were in their own domains almost little kings. These Free Imperial Knights were among the greatest obstacles to the peace of Germany.

The Cities. The great cities were as independent as the princes, and, although their influence was in many ways beneficent, they helped to perpetuate the divisions in Germany's political life. Many towns had under the Hohenstaufens gradually attained the position of Free Imperial Cities. This meant that, like the princes, each city as one body owed allegiance only to the Emperor. Except for the Emperor's authority and control, the Free Imperial Cities were practically independent states. As in the centuries after 1254 the Emperor's authority was often merely nominal, the independence of the Free Cities was a very

real thing. In many respects the results of this were good. If the Free Cities were an obstacle to union in Germany, they at least ensured the existence of a number of strong walled towns, inhabited by numerous sturdy and thriving burghers, whose interests were all on the side of peace. Within those walls the City Council gave law and order according to a settled system ; fairs were held, and men from all parts of Europe came to exchange their wares. Domestic architecture flourished, and the literature for which Germany had been so famous still found a home there. The chivalric poetry of the *Minnesinger* had died in the struggles of princes and emperors, but in the next three centuries a hardy, if less melodious, poetry flourished among the *Meistersänger* of the cities.

Great Churchmen.

Even before the Hohenstaufen dynasty had fallen in Germany, the great churchmen, like the princes, had been able to throw off the authority of the Emperor. The archbishops and the greatest bishops were princes as well as priests, and governed their temporal possessions, their great lands, like any other sovereigns. Even certain abbots were princes within the abbey's domains, and added further to the confusion of authorities. There were lords and rulers in every corner of Germany, and outside the cities the lower classes had little freedom. The greater number were bound to the soil as serfs, and even the freeholders, with the extension of the nobles' power, had lost their ancient freedom.

The King.

The right of electing the King of the Romans, as the head of Germany was called, had fallen, by the middle of the thirteenth century, into the hands of seven of the greatest princes of Germany, who came to be known as Electors. These were the Archbishops of Mainz, Trèves, and Cologne, and the Princes of Saxony, Brandenburg, the Palatinate, and Bohemia. The Electors did not

Rival Kings.

always act in unison, as when in 1247 the archbishops chose William, Count of Holland, for king, against Conrad IV, who held the title of king in the lifetime of his father, the Emperor Frederick II. Frederick died in 1250, and Conrad in 1254, in Italy; his son Conradin was a child, kept by his uncle, Louis of Bavaria, at the Castle of Ravensburg, on the Lake of Constance. William of Holland was thus left without a rival in Germany, though few of the princes respected his authority. He was a good-looking young man and a courageous soldier, but had no particular capacity for the high position he was expected to fill. He was killed in 1256, in an expedition against the Frisians, whose territory he hoped to add to his hereditary domains.

Jan. 28.

Richard of Cornwall.

For a year Germany remained without any head; but in 1257 the Electors, being divided, chose two rival sovereigns, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, and Alfonso X, King of Castile. But Alfonso never came to Germany, so that Richard was at least nominal sovereign for the next fifteen years.

Richard of Cornwall was the brother of King Henry III of England, and the second son of King John and his Queen, Isabella of Angoulême. If any foreigner could rule Germany Richard might be expected to do so, as he had many qualifications. Born in 1209, he had been brought up to be a soldier and statesman. He had fought in the English army in Poitou, he had gone on Crusade to Palestine with Simon de Montfort, and he had engaged in administrative work in England. With Germany he had long had a connexion, as in 1235 he had helped to arrange the marriage between his sister Isabella and the Emperor Frederick II. Thus he had some claim to the support of the party of the Hohenstaufen. On the other hand, he was a strong supporter

of the Church, and even before his election in Germany was known as a pious founder, and generous benefactor of the Abbey of Hayles in Gloucestershire. In the quarrels between Henry III and the barons in England Richard had won the confidence of the people by standing neutral and being above parties. He had great wealth, from land in Cornwall, Wales, and other parts of England, and this wealth he spent. There was therefore reason to hope that this great nobleman would be able to support his position, and to bring peace to Germany, distracted so long by feuds and internal quarrels. He had already, in 1244, been asked by Pope Innocent IV to accept the imperial throne, but had refused, out of consideration for his ties to Frederick II.

The Electors.

The double election of Richard and Alfonso is of great constitutional importance, as for the first time in German history the seven princes, who next century formed the College of Electors, took part in it. The Archbishop Conrad of Cologne, the Archbishop of Mainz, King Ottokar of Bohemia, the Count Palatine of the Rhine supported Richard. The Duke of Saxony, the Margrave of Brandenburg, the Archbishop of Trèves supported Alfonso, who, however, did nothing to make good his claims.

Richard's Reign.

In May 1257 Richard and his wife, Sancha of Provence, came to Germany. He was crowned at Aachen by the Archbishop of Cologne. The next eighteen months were spent in making a royal progress up the Rhine, when Richard visited every great nobleman and city that adhered to his party. He went as far as Bâle, and his authority was acknowledged throughout the Rhineland, even by the ancient cities of Worms and Spires, which had been the consistent supporters of the Hohenstaufen. But elsewhere in Germany he had

no authority. At the beginning of 1259 he went back to England.

In 1260 he returned to the Rhineland for four months; in 1262 he paid another visit of six months. After this the Barons' War in England absorbed his attention. He was taken prisoner at Lewes in 1264; his property was confiscated by Simon de Montfort; and, although it was restored after the triumph of Henry III's party at Evesham, he was never so wealthy again. Yet it was only his wealth which had made his position possible in Germany.

Richard's Laws.

Nevertheless Richard's last visit to Germany, for twelve months from August 1268, has left the deepest mark on German history. At Aachen he was most at home: there he had built a court-house, given jewels to the cathedral, confirmed the privileges of the citizens. From Aachen he went to Cologne, then up the Rhine to Worms, where he held a Diet (April 1269). In this assembly of princes and cities, if not of the whole Empire, at least of the Rhineland, certain laws were passed which have made Richard's reputation as a ruler in Germany.[1]

The cities themselves, as well as the nobles, were in the habit of levying extortionate tribute from people passing through or by them. Richard prohibited this.

'Richard, by the grace of God, King, et cetera, to all his beloved and faithful citizens of Strasburg, greeting and all prosperity.

We do order and command you strictly and faithfully, by the example of many princes, counts also, magnates, nobles and barons, and of many other cities, that you, forwarding by your common prayer a general peace in the city of Strasburg, and faithfully and manfully asking us to keep the aforesaid peace, along with

[1] These will be found in Pertz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, Leges, ii. 381–2.

others, within eight days of receiving these presents, completely put down in your district the tolls, taxes, customs, or dues and exactions, especially that which is vulgarly called *ungelt*—all those which people believe to be contrary to custom and justice. Nor are ye to permit them henceforth to be exacted from any traveller; lest if (which God forbid) ye act otherwise in this respect, ye may be lawfully excluded entirely and shut out from peace of this kind.

Given at Frankfort, the 12 day of May, indiction 12, the 13th year of our reign.'

At the end of July 1269 Richard, whose health was now giving way, left Germany for ever. He died of paralysis in 1272.

Barbarity of the Interregnum.

Although he had succeeded during his somewhat brief periods in Germany in securing some degree of peace and settled government among the princes and cities of the Rhineland, it cannot be said that elsewhere Richard had any effect. The rest of Germany was simply left to the arbitrary power of the princes, except where, as in the north, the great cities were able to maintain themselves in peace and independence. The princes badly needed a firm hand. From this period, from 1254 to 1273, known as the Interregnum, many stories of cruelty and rapacity have come down. In 1256 Duke Louis of Bavaria, the protector of Conradin, executed his wife, whom he unjustly suspected of being unfaithful to him. He had previously had her chief lady-in-waiting thrown out of the castle-window. In the war between King Bela of Hungary and the people of Styria, who objected to having him as their monarch, fifteen hundred men were burnt to death within the church of Mödling. During disputes for territory among the ducal family of Silesia, one of the claimants, 'Henry the Fat', was imprisoned by Conrad von Glogau in a cage which was too small to

DENMARK
Kiel
HOLSTEIN
Lübeck
Hamburg
BREMEN
Bremen
OLDENBG
FRIESLAND
UTRECHT
HOLLAND
Ems
OSNABRÜCK
Weser
BRUNSWICK
LÜNEBURG
Elbe
GUELD
CLEVES
Münster
MÜNSTER
LIPPE
PADERBORN
HILDESHEIM
Magdebur
Antwerp
BRABANT
MARK
FLANDERS
Brussels
LIMBURG
JÜLICH
Cologne
HESSE
THURING
Meuse
Liege
Namur
Rhine
NASSAU
HESSE
FULDA
HENNEBERG
Frankfurt
LUXEMBURG
TREVES
Mainz
MAINZ
Würzburg
BAMBERG
Bambe
Moselle
Treves
Worms
Heidelberg
PALATINATE
Verdun
Metz
Nürnberg
Nancy
LORRAINE
BADEN
Neckar
Strasburg
Ulm
BAV
Augsburg
FREIBURG
Munic
Bâle
AUGSBURG
Saône
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BURGUNDY
BALE
Sempach
St. Gall
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Appenzel
Glarus
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Berne
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Brünn
Moldau
Ratisbon
Danube
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Buda Pest
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Oxford

allow of standing or sitting upright. In a war in Thuringia between 1256 and 1263, Albert the Fat, Duke of Brunswick, perpetrated cruelties which have made him infamous: one nobleman who had risen against him was hanged by the feet till he died. Even the sports of the nobility ended in bloodshed and slaughter: at a tournament at Neuss, near Dusseldorf, the fight became real, and thirty-six nobles and three hundred men-at-arms are said to have been slain. It was over a country thus divided and distracted that Count Rudolf of Habsburg was elected king in 1273.

Rudolf of Habsburg, 1273.

Rudolf, with whom begins the greatness of the historic House of Habsburg, was born in 1218, and for the first fifty-five years of his life was known only among the Swabian nobility. His father had been a faithful supporter of Frederick II, and by that monarch had been granted the county of Aargau. The castle of Habsburg was situated at the junction of the river Aar with the Rhine. Rudolf had been something of a freelance during the Interregnum. In 1263, when the citizens of Strasburg expelled their bishop, Walter von Geroldseck, Rudolf had fought in the bishop's service. Subsequently, however, he is found on the side of the city. When the news reached him of his election as king he was actually engaged in a private war with the city of Bâle. Yet Rudolf was different from the other fighting knights of Germany. His modest bearing concealed the qualities of ambition, resolution, and capacity. Tall, thin, strong, with a prominent aquiline nose, he was a commanding figure, even among a people of warriors. His sense of justice was badly needed in the Germany of those days, and the Electors, though they knew it not, could have made no better choice than this simple count of the Aargau.

Germany wanted a ruler. 'To Thee, O Lord, we poor folk make moan; the Devil has sown his seeds in this land! Law Thy hand created for protection of Thy children: but where now is Law? Widows and orphans weep that the princes do not unite to have a Kaiser.'[1] But the great princes, from mutual jealousy, were not likely to elect one of themselves. There was more chance of their uniting to elect a noble of lesser degree, whose hereditary possessions would not be great enough to make him a danger to any one of them. The wise and public-spirited Archbishop Werner of Mainz saw that Count Rudolf, by reason both of his strong character and his comparatively humble station among the princes, had most chance of being accepted. Archbishop Werner was supported by Frederick III, Count of Hohenzollern, who held the position of Burggraf, or imperial officer, in the city of Nürnberg. Although not one of the great princes, Rudolf of Habsburg had already considerable reputation as a soldier, and was personally known to Pope Gregory X, who also supported his election. Nor were his personal possessions by any means contemptible: they were not so big as one of the great duchies or margravates, but they included considerable tracts by the Lake of Constance, in the Black Forest, and in Alsace. He was nobody's 'man'; he was a prince of the Empire, and struck his own coinage.

The need of a king.

The new king was elected at Frankfort at Michaelmas 1273. He was recognized by Gregory X as King of the Romans; but he did not aspire to the imperial crown. In 1275 he met the Pope at Lausanne. There he confirmed to the Pope the temporal lands, such as the famous inheritance of the Countess Matilda (who died in 1115),

Rudolf as king.

[1] From an old collection of *Minnesinger*, quoted by Carlyle, *Frederick the Great*, Book II, chap. vii.

which had made so many disputes between the Empire and Papacy. He was not going to be misled by the fatal fascination of Italy. Rudolf was a pure German and aimed only at building up a German kingdom.

His aims.

He set before himself three objects and pursued them steadfastly. One was to reduce the power of Ottokar of Bohemia, who was building up a great Slavonic power in the south-east of Germany, and occupying many portions of German soil. The second was to reduce the disturbed parts of Germany to law and order, continuing the work of Richard of Cornwall against the castles of the robber knights of the Rhineland and elsewhere. The third object, which every Habsburg has since pursued with single-mindedness, was to add something to the domains of his house.

Ottokar, King of Bohemia.

Ottokar II, King of Bohemia, was by far the most powerful of the German princes during the Interregnum. He belonged to the ancient native House of Premysl, whose origins went back to the end of the eighth century. Ottokar was undoubtedly one of the ablest men of the age: handsome, clever, brave, he succeeded for a time in making Bohemia the greatest power in Germany. His policy was to stand not as a Slavonic but as a Germanic power. German colonists were attracted to Bohemia, and encouraged to settle in the towns, to which he granted charters, permitting them to be governed under the old German laws. By this means he built up a solid middle class in Bohemia, as a counterpoise to the feudal nobility whose great estates and fortified castles made them dangerous to the crown.

Through his wife Adela, sister of Frederick II, the last Babenberg Duke of Austria, he established himself in that country, and also in Styria, after he had defeated Bela IV of Hungary, in the great battle of Kressenbrun,

on the river March. His right to the Styrian Mark had been formally recognized by Richard, Earl of Cornwall. When Richard died in 1272 Ottokar had reason to hope he himself might be elected German king. He had always acted as a German prince; the great Prussian city of Königsberg takes its name from him. Ottokar founded it during a Crusade in which he took part with the Order of Teutonic Knights against the heathen Slavs in 1245. It is said that Rudolf of Habsburg served as an esquire in this expedition, and attracted the attention of Ottokar 'for his prudent hardy ways'. When Rudolf was elected king in 1273 Ottokar's power extended over Bohemia, Austria, Styria (acquired in 1260 on the death of Duke Henry of the House of Zähringen). Carniola and Istria passed with Carinthia under his sway in 1269, and even Verona and some contiguous Italian towns took him for their overlord. 1260.

Rudolf and Ottokar at war.

Rudolf was no sooner elected king than he proceeded to reduce the power of Ottokar. The princes at his election had declared that grants of fiefs made since the death of Frederick II were void. This would have reduced Ottokar to a mere Bohemian king again. Ottokar, on his part, refused to acknowledge the royal position of Rudolf at all, and would not do homage to him for his German lands. In 1276 war broke out. The 'Ban of the Empire' was proclaimed against the King of Bohemia. Rudolf invaded Austria, where he was joined by the local German nobles. Vienna was besieged: Ottokar came to its relief, but was at the same time menaced by a Hungarian war and an insurrection among the Bohemian nobility. There was nothing for it but to submit. He was left as King of Bohemia, but lost all his other lands except Moravia. Two years later Ottokar again appealed to the arbitrament of war. He was met

by Rudolf and defeated at the battle of Durrenkrut, August 26, 1278, on the Marchfeld, near the place where he had won his great victory of Kressenbrun over the Hungarians. Ottokar lost his life as well as his army at Durrenkrut, and with him passed away the greatness of Bohemia, and all chance of a Czech Empire. Bohemia itself remained under the House of Premysl for two more generations. After the death of Ottokar's grandson, Wenceslaus III, in 1306, it passed through a troubled period, till in 1310 John, Count of Luxemburg, obtained it, through his marriage with Princess Elisabeth, the heiress of the House of Premysl.

Rudolf supreme.

With the destruction of the Empire of Ottokar of Bohemia, Rudolf of Habsburg could call himself king throughout Germany. The princes retained their local independence, but the King was the supreme guardian of law and order. In virtue of this position Rudolf aimed at putting down the lawlessness of the lesser princes and the knights. Private wars between the great princes he could not always prevent, but he would not tolerate the robber knights of the Rhine and of Thuringia, who preyed upon the peaceful merchants using the trade-routes of those important districts.

Diets held.

In 1281 Rudolf held Diets of the Empire at Nürnberg and Mainz, where the land peace was solemnly renewed, and the princes charged to submit their differences to the King's arbitration. Yet seven years later a fierce war was waged between the Archbishop of Cologne and the Count of Brabant.

Castles on Rhine.

The laws of the Empire forbade the building of castles, which were not necessary for the Empire's security. The massive ruins which picturesquely crown the crags along the valley of the Rhine are a witness to the ineffectiveness of these laws. The lords of these castles, charging toll all along

the river, seriously hampered the flow of trade, on which the cities and indeed the whole country depended. The cities were the soundest elements in mediaeval Germany, and every emperor, worthy of the name, had made it his policy to support them. Rudolf, too, like Richard of Cornwall, took up the task. The lesser knights had little chance against him; even greater lords like the sinister Eberhard of Würtemberg, who called himself 'the friend of God and the enemy of the world', felt his power. This noble and his confederates made open war upon the Swabian cities. Rudolf besieged him in 1286, and hurled his castle of Stuttgart to the ground. In Thuringia he was conspicuously successful in clearing the country. In the year 1290 alone it is said he hung twenty-nine robber nobles. In all he destroyed sixty-six castles there. His tremendous activity when nearly three score years and ten is proved by the list of towns and cities from which edicts are addressed. Admirers called him the 'law made living'—*lex animata*. Thus under Rudolf the German kingship again became national. On the Rhine, in Thuringia, and in the lands which he and his family now held—Austria, Styria, Carinthia—the law was enforced. Princes on the fringes of the Empire—Philip, Count of Savoy, in 1284, the Count of Burgundy (Franche Comté) in 1289—were forced to acknowledge their allegiance to the Empire. Outside the Rhineland, Swabia, Thuringia, and the Habsburg family lands the royal power had little effect, but the League of the Hansa Towns did much to preserve peace and commerce along the shores of the North Sea and the Baltic. The German kingdom had at last become a reality. During the pontificate of Pope Nicolas III (1277–80) Rudolf even dreamed of reviving the imperial power in Italy. He sent an imperial

Rudolf protects trade and cities.

He extends his sway.

legate to Tuscany and Romagna to demand the homage of the cities. A few complied, but the Pope protested. Rudolf, who was involved in war with Ottokar of Bohemia at the time, abandoned the Italian project, and ceded to the Papal See the imperial rights over Ravenna and other cities so long disputed between the two powers.

In the time of Rudolf the Habsburgs became a family with enormous possessions in land. After the submission of Ottokar of Bohemia the Duchy of Austria and the Mark of Styria were given to Rudolf's son Albert. From the Count of Savoy Rudolf gained Morat, Payerne, and Gümmenen in Switzerland; but, in attempting to take Berne, he experienced the only serious failure of his life. In 1288 he besieged the city. But the monarch who had broken the Empire of Ottokar and coerced the proud princes of Germany had to retreat before the constant courage of the burghers of Berne.

Death of Rudolf. His character.

Rudolf died on July 15, 1291, in his seventy-third year, and in the nineteenth year of his reign. His tall soldierly figure, his strongly-marked features, his simple dress, and unaffected manners made a deep impression upon the popular imagination. He did not convey the idea of magnificence, of brilliant imperial majesty and romantic chivalry, like the House of Hohenstaufen. But he was brave, just, affable. The merits of a sovereign, he said, consisted in princely virtues rather than in magnificent clothes. He shared the hardships of his soldiers, and in the Bohemian war refused to drink when they had no water. To the common people he was kindly and considerate. 'For God's sake, let them alone,' he once said to his guards, who were preventing some poor petitioners from getting to him: 'I was not elected Emperor to be secluded from mankind.' Stories of his modesty were long current in Germany, and, like

Alfred of England, he was said to have been scolded by a housewife, when at Mainz in 1288, dressed as a simple soldier, he entered a baker's shop one morning to warm himself at the fire. He took the reproaches in good humour, saying that he was an old soldier who had spent all his fortune in the service of 'that rascal Rudolf'.

Adolphus of Nassau, 1291–8.

Rudolf had hoped to make the German crown hereditary in his family, and had been bitterly disappointed when, in the last year of his life, at the Diet of Frankfort, the Electors declined to elect his eldest son Albert. On the death of the old king the Electors met once more, and chose another 'poor count', Adolphus of Nassau, a distinguished and daring soldier, but one who had not the capacity for ruling which Rudolf had shown. Adolphus's reign was of little importance in the history of the time. He was not strong enough to control the princes, although he wisely continued Rudolf's policy of encouraging the cities, and trying to repress the illegal Rhine tolls. His alliance was considered worth something by Edward I of England, who gave him a subsidy in 1294, during the war with Philip IV of France. But Adolphus never left Germany. Civil war broke out in Thuringia, which he was trying to add to his family possessions. The imperial power became a mockery once more. In 1298 the Electors resolved to have a new king, and to elect Albert of Austria, the son of the late King Rudolf. Adolphus gathered his forces to meet this danger. The two parties met, in July 1298, at Göllheim, in the Rhine Valley, between Spires and Worms. The rival monarchs met face to face in the fray, and the judgement of battle gave the crown to Albert.

Albert of Austria, 1298–1308.

The verdict of the battle of Göllheim was ratified by the Electors immediately afterwards. The new king, like most of his house, was a vigorous ruler, and a

determined promoter of the Habsburg interests. Although his reign was by no means a failure he left little reputation behind him. There was nothing winning about his manner, as there was with his father Rudolf. A chronicler of the time describes him as 'a gross man, with a ferocious aspect, in person like a countryman, and avaricious for the sake of his children'. Yet as ruler of Germany he took wide views. He did what he could to strengthen the cities, put down the vexatious Rhine tolls, and kept the princes in order. For this the princes opposed him, and it is for this his memory has been poisoned. In his private life he gave an excellent example to the rough nobility. To his wife he was kind and faithful, and by his children, of whom only nine survived of twenty that were born, he was adored. After he was murdered, his wife, Elisabeth of Carinthia, retired to the Convent of Königsfelden, till her death in 1313, at the age of fifty.

Opposed by the Pope.

At first Albert had to meet trouble from the side of the Pope, Boniface VIII (1294–1303), who refused to recognize him as King of the Romans. Boniface was an honest man, but with ideas concerning the papal power such as even the great Hildebrand or Innocent III could scarcely have maintained. He was on firm ground, however, in denouncing the election of Albert, as being the result of conspiracy and rebellion against the legitimate king, Adolphus of Nassau. Albert was summoned to appear before the Pope, or to send envoys to justify himself. The Elector Archbishop Gerhard of Mainz supported Boniface, but Albert invaded the Electorate with an army, and forced the Archbishop to submission. He took advantage of this success to reduce the Rhine tolls, as far as they were within the control of the Archbishop and of his ally the Count Palatine.

Albert had previously strengthened himself by an alliance with Philip le Bel of France. But now, as Pope Boniface began to take up a less intractable attitude, Albert was ready to be friends with the Papacy. Boniface's quarrel with Philip le Bel over the clerical tithes was then at its height. In 1303, shortly after Albert and the Pope had been reconciled, Boniface died at Rome, from ill treatment at the hands of the French king's partisans.

Reconciled with the Pope.

The attempts of Albert to extend his domains were persistent, but not successful. In 1299 he tried to annex Holland, Zealand, and Friesland to the Empire, claiming them as escheats. The Count of Hainault, however, defeated him in the field, and succeeded in making good his claims. On the extinction of the House of Premysl in Bohemia, in 1306, Albert induced the Bohemian Estates to confer the crown upon his son Rudolf. But the young king's reign was short and troubled. He died of dysentery next year. In 1308 Albert, who as Count of Habsburg had considerable possessions in Switzerland, tried to assert a claim that the Forest Cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden were Habsburg lordships. The men of the Cantons resisted.[1] Albert was on his way to invade them when he was murdered on May 1, 1308, by his nephew John. There had been a dispute about some inheritance, which the uncle withheld from the nephew. When met by the conspirators Albert was riding with a single attendant through the fields from the ferry of the river Reuss to visit the cradle of his house, the castle of Habsburg. He fell within sight of it. Nearly a hundred and thirty

Albert endeavours to extend his domains.

His death.

[1] It was in connexion with this contest that the legend of William Tell grew up.

years were to pass before the House of Austria was again to wear the imperial crown of Germany.

Henry VII, 1308–13. His character.

On the death of Albert the Electors, who had already in the late king's lifetime refused to elect his son Rudolf, chose yet another 'poor count', Henry of Luxemburg. The choice was justified. Henry, as described by the Florentine historian Villani, 'was a man wise, just, and gracious; brave and intrepid in arms; a man of honour and a good Catholic; and although by his lineage he was of no great condition, yet he was of a magnanimous heart, much feared and held in awe; and, if he had lived longer, would have done the greatest things.' All who met and have left any record of him were impressed with the nobility of his character. His ideals were the highest: to rule his country in justice and peace, and not to let Italy, 'the garden of the Empire, to run waste'.[1]

Henry, before his election, was known throughout Germany and France as a brilliant performer in the tourney, and as a man of high and knightly character. He had kept his small dominion, Luxemburg in the Ardennes, in perfect order and peace, so that it became an important trade-route between Germany and France. His brother Baldwin was Archbishop of Trèves, another friend of the family, the physician Peter Aichspalter, was Archbishop of Mainz. The election took place near Rense, a few miles above Coblenz on the Rhine. On the colonnaded platform known as the Königstuhl, a point from which the blast of a horn could be heard in the four Electorates of Mainz, Trèves, Cologne, the Palatinate, Henry was elected on November 15, 1308. He was then forty-six years old.

Henry spent just under two years in Germany as king before he went on his great Italian expedition.

[1] Dante, *Purg.* vi. 106.

During this period he settled the disturbances of Bohemia by marrying his son John, with the hearty consent of the Bohemian Estates, to Elisabeth, the second daughter of Wenceslaus II. King John of Bohemia became a *beau idéal—corona militiae*—of chivalry: active in his own kingdom, and seeking adventures wherever they were to be found, from Avignon to Königsberg. He was a faithful ally of the Crown of France, and met his death at the battle of Crécy, fighting for France, although already stricken with blindness. Bohemia remained under the House of Luxemburg till 1437.

His son John of Bohemia.

At the Diet of Spires, September 1309, Henry did something to establish peace in Germany. Like his predecessors, he relied upon the support of the Free Cities, and he showed his determination at this Diet by putting Count Eberhard of Würtemberg to the ban of the Empire. The Count had come to the Diet with two hundred armed knights and left it mocking at the King's commands. The ban was executed in the King's name by Conrad of Weinsberg and the Swabian towns; Eberhard's power was greatly reduced, but at the death of Henry VII in Italy in 1313 it revived again. It was at the same Diet at Spires in 1309 that Henry announced his intention of going to Italy, to receive the imperial crown, to renew the Mediaeval Empire. The great adventure ended in failure, yet it was by no means unstatesmanlike. Italy was without a master, and the noblest souls, like Dante, were yearning for a ruler, for one who would keep the peace, and restore the glories of the Empire. Germany suffered from the absence of the King, but would have gained from the new position he would have acquired, if successful in Italy. For it had been proved that Germany could not be permanently

Diet of Spires.

Henry aims at the imperial crown.

kept in peace by 'poor counts' as kings. The King must be something far greater than the great princes, otherwise his authority would be flouted and made of no avail by overmighty subjects. The land, it is true, would be none the better for an absentee emperor, like Frederick II. But a German nobleman raised to the throne by the princes was only *primus inter pares*; he was liable to be treated as Fulk of Anjou is said to have treated Hugh Capet, the elected King of France. 'Who made you Count?' Hugh is reported to have asked his rebellious vassal. 'Who made you King?' was the pertinent reply. In Germany too the Electoral College was on much too narrow a basis. Seven Electors, of whom three were priests and four were hereditary princes, could hardly be said to represent the opinion of all the states and nobles of Germany. Thus the King's authority was seldom recognized either in practice or theory throughout the land as a whole. But a king who went to Italy and received the imperial crown from Christ's vicar in the Holy City was in a different position. He would return to Germany, not as the chosen of seven Electors, but as the head of the Roman Empire, the successor of that stupendous, though broken, line of rulers, from Augustus to Charlemagne, from Charlemagne to Otto the Great, Frederick Barbarossa, Frederick II. He would come with all the divinity that hedges a king of ancient lineage, supported by Holy Church, and bringing with him something of the magic spell which the idea of Rome, classical and mediaeval, never failed to exercise over the mediaeval mind. He would no longer be *primus inter pares* among German princes, but Holy Roman Emperor, whose dignity and authority none could challenge.[1]

[1] For the history of the Italian expedition of Henry VII see pp. 60 ff.

CHAPTER II

ITALY IN THE AGE OF DANTE

WHEN Conrad, son of Frederick II, died in 1254 Italy had been for twenty years the scene of fierce wars, the struggles of Empire against the Pope and against the Lombard League of cities. During the following years, however, these struggles of 'Ghibelines' against 'Guelfs' became gradually less acute. By the end of the thirteenth century life in Italy had become comparatively peaceful. The next two centuries were years of commercial prosperity, of intellectual and literary development, and of apathy with respect to the glories and toils of war.

The glorious mountains of the Alps, which wall so abruptly the smiling plain of Lombardy, have marked off Italy as *one* country, although not till the late nineteenth century did its people become politically one. In 1254 it consisted of many states. The Holy Roman Empire had ceased to exist in all but name. The chief powers in the land were the Pope, the great communes—Florence, Milan, Genoa, Pisa, Venice were the greatest—and the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, which was for a few years more to be under a scion of the Hohenstaufen House. The Pope's territories—the State of the Church—occupied the greater part of Central Italy, stretching from a distance of about 60 miles south of Rome right up to the con-

Many states in Italy.

Papal territory.

fines of Tuscany, and north-east almost to the river Po. Romagna, Emilia, the March of Ancona, the Patrimony of St. Peter, Campagna formed the State of the Church. But the Pope was little more than a kind of feudal overlord there, exercising a precarious authority over almost independent nobles and civic communes.

Sicily.

The kingdom of Sicily, which at this time included Naples, was founded in the eleventh century by the Normans, and by marriage had come to the Hohenstaufen family, under whom it had about fifty years of brilliant history. After Conrad IV's death in 1254 it was ruled by the energetic Manfred, the most capable of Frederick II's illegitimate sons.

Tuscany and Lombardy.

The great communes of Tuscany and Lombardy were the soundest elements in Mediaeval Italy. Originally under the jurisdiction of some local count or bishop, they had thrown off their rule and now each city governed itself, enjoying an independence for which it had had to fight hard, owning now no superior but the Emperor or the Pope. This question of allegiance divided city from city, and even family from family within the city. Those who acknowledged the Pope as their political as well as their spiritual head formed the Guelfic party, those who still acknowledged the power of the Emperor were the Ghibelines. The names were originally taken from two great German families which had disputed for the Empire. But now they were names with a vastly developed significance: most of the great Italian cities or communes were Guelfic, most of the great Italian nobles were Ghibeline. Thus the Guelfic party came to mean not so much the party of the Pope, but upholders of civic independence: they became the commercial party. The Ghibelines, on the other hand, lost their connexion with the Emperor, or

Guelfs and Ghibelines.

held it rather only as a tradition, as emperors no longer had real authority in Italy. They became in reality the party of feudalism, ready to welcome an emperor if he came to Italy, but generally engaged in private and public feuds against the upholders of civic authority and republicanism.

Frederick II's struggle with the Papacy.

The Emperor Frederick II (1215–50), the 'Wonder of the World', had devoted most of his time to Italy. If he, with all his ability and resources, could not make the Empire a reality there, it was unlikely that any of his successors would achieve this. The struggle which he had carried on with the Papacy had ended in defeat, and when he died on December 13, 1250, at Fiorentino in the south of Italy, he left to his son, Conrad IV, no safe place outside the kingdom of Naples itself.

Conrad IV.

1251.

At war with the Pope.

His death.

Young Conrad, who was aged twenty-two at his father's death, had been attempting vigorously for some years to maintain the Hohenstaufen rule in Germany. On Frederick's death he made his way to Italy, journeying through the Tyrol to the March of Treviso, and then by ship to the south of Italy, where Manfred, his half-brother, energetically upheld the Hohenstaufen cause. Pope Innocent IV refused to recognize Conrad as Emperor, so the war between the two powers continued, till Conrad died on May 21, 1254, at the age of twenty-six. The papal party accused Manfred of having poisoned him. There seems no truth in the accusation. Subsequent Italian history contains many stories of poisoning, many of them being much better founded. Manfred, now twenty-two years old, took charge of Naples and Sicily, as regent for Conrad IV's son Conradin, who was meanwhile kept safely in Germany by his uncle, the Duke of Bavaria. Under Manfred the kingdom of Sicily,

Manfred regent.

which still included Naples and a good portion of the south of Italy, maintained its independence of the Pope, and continued to flourish as in the days of Frederick II. Dante praises Manfred and his father for having encouraged the writing of poetry in the native Italian tongue. In the *Purgatorio* Manfred is met, doing penance indeed, as having died fighting against Holy Church, but assured in the end of salvation.

Ezzelino da Romano.

In the north of Italy the imperial cause still maintained itself under the vigorous leadership of the infamous Ezzelino da Romano, who for his tyranny and cruelty is placed by Dante, in the *Inferno*, among the tyrants, in a stream of boiling blood, immersed up to his brow.

> That brow,
> Whereon the hair so jetty clustering hangs,
> Is Azzolino.

Ezzelino was Lord of Verona, Vicenza, Padua, Brescia, and other towns which he kept under an iron rule. But his tortures made him odious to all people, so when Pope Alexander IV (1254–61) preached a 'Crusade' against him, it was welcomed by many Ghibelines as well as Guelfs. Feeling the storm gather round him, Ezzelino collected his forces and marched into Lombardy

His defeat.

to seize the great city of Milan. But even the Ghibelines of Milan, Cremona, Ferrara, and Mantua would have none of him. Surrounded and attacked by them he was wounded and taken prisoner at the battle of Cassano. In prison at Bassano the inflexible tyrant refused to

His death.

yield: rejecting all food he resolved to die, but as the process was not speedy enough he tore the bandages off his wounds, 'and so ended a life marked by crafty ambition, loyalty to the Emperor his overlord, resolute government, and unbounded cruelty.' With the death

1259. Oct. 7.

of Ezzelino, and next year of his brother Alberigo (who

was fearfully tortured), the power of the House of Romano disappeared from North Italy.

Yet the Ghibelines as a whole were not powerless. The Regent Manfred was ruling prosperously in Sicily. In 1258, when a false rumour was current of Conradin's death, he was crowned king at Palermo, to the universal joy of the Sicilians. He was even sufficiently strong to detach forces to uphold the Ghibeline cause further off. Tuscany had by this time become in great part Guelfic, but the Ghibelines were encouraged by the success of Manfred to renew their efforts. Some came from France, where they had been exiled, many others came from Siena; Manfred sent a body of German horse. On September 4, 1260, the Guelfic army of Florence met the Ghibelines at Monteaperto, on the river Arbia. The battle was lost for the Florentines through the treachery of one of their leaders, Bocca degli Abati, who changed sides with a large part of the Guelfic horse. For the first time in history the *Carroccio*[1] of Florence was captured. The lovely city itself, so strong was party passion in those days, would have been destroyed by the victorious Ghibelines, although many of them were Florentines. But Farinata degli Uberti, of an ancient Ghibeline family of Florence, loved his city too well, and eloquently pleaded for its safety. Florence was saved, and one cannot help wishing that Dante had not ranked him with all the other enemies of the city, and placed him in a red-hot tomb in the *Inferno*. With the victory of Monteaperto the Ghibelines again dominated Tuscany.

Manfred, King of Sicily.

Aids Ghibelines in Tuscany.

Florence threatened with destruction.

[1] The *Carroccio* was the emblem of the independence of each North Italian city. It was an *ark* (like the Ark of the Covenant), with the city standard rising from it, and was drawn to battle by chosen bullocks. It contained the consecrated elements of the Church, and picked men swore to die rather than it should be taken.

Struggle of the Papacy with the Ghibelines.

The old fear, felt by the popes, was revived, the event against which they had engaged in the long great strife of Empire and Papacy. If the imperial power became supreme in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, south of the Papal States, and also in Tuscany and Lombardy to the north, the Papacy would be politically helpless. Manfred in Sicily, the Ghibelines in Tuscany, represented still the imperial cause. By its own resources the Papacy could not destroy them. It must look for help from without.

Pope Innocent IV, the most strenuous opponent of the Emperor Frederick II, had offered the crown of Sicily to Edmund, younger son of King Henry III of England. King Henry had accepted the crown for his son, and had sent the Pope much money, with which to prosecute the conquest of Sicily. The young prince appeared in Sicilian dress at the court of Henry III (1255), and many of the English clergy and barons were driven into rebellion by the high taxes which the King extracted from them to satisfy the Pope's demands. But after the death of Pope Innocent IV (1254) Manfred's power grew even stronger in the south of Italy, and the new Pope, Alexander IV, even had to leave Rome in 1257, where the Bolognese Brancaleone ruled the Commune as senator with great vigour, and maintained the independence of the city. Alexander IV died in 1261, and was succeeded by Urban IV, a Frenchman, the son of a cobbler of Troyes, who had risen in the Church solely through his abilities. Urban IV had little power at first. The Senator Brancaleone (who died in 1258) had left Rome friendly to Manfred, hostile to the Papacy. Urban lived not in the Holy City, but at Viterbo. As English money had ceased to come, the title of Prince Edmund of England had been formally cancelled in 1258, and the

Pope leaves Rome.

crown of Sicily was offered to Charles of Anjou in 1264. The offer was accepted, but Urban did not live to see the results of calling in the French to Italy, for he died in 1264. Charles arrived next year. Charles of Anjou made King of Sicily by the Pope.

Charles, Count of Anjou, brother of Louis IX of France, was at this time thirty-five years of age. Through his wife Beatrice he was also Count of Provence, so that his resources for a great undertaking seemed sufficiently large. His wife's three sisters were queens,[1] and it was said that she wished to be a queen also. Charles indeed was ready to play the part of king. 'He was', says Villani, the Florentine historian, 'wise and prudent in council; valiant, severe, and dreaded of kings . . . unshaken in adversity; keeping his word; speaking little, doing much.' He was 'grave as a priest', seldom smiled, was severe in dealing out justice, and a zealous Catholic. Unlike his gentle and kindly brother St. Louis he had a forbidding look. Such a man had courage, resolution, and ability to win a crown, but he would never gain the love of his subjects, least of all of the easy-going, pleasure-loving South Italians. Oct. 2.

Charles, with the leave of his brother St. Louis, collected a French force for his great adventure. He had to swear allegiance to the Pope, to agree to pay tribute for Sicily, never to unite the kingdom with the imperial crown, and to preserve all the immunities of the clergy. Before he arrived in Italy Urban IV had died, and was succeeded by another Frenchman as Pope, Guy Foulquois, Archbishop of Narbonne, who assumed the name of Clement IV. Clement placed King Manfred under excommunication, and made the Charles comes to Italy. Feb. 5, 1265.

[1] One sister was married to Louis IX of France, another to Henry III of England, the third to Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who was elected King of the Romans (i. e. Germany) in 1257.

way easy for Charles by advancing him large sums of money.

Charles first made a preliminary visit to Italy, coming to Rome from Provence by sea. The Pope could not trust himself in the Holy City, but sent Cardinals there solemnly to invest Charles with the crown of Sicily. The new king then returned to Provence and brought his forces[1]—knights, footmen, and slingers—by the land-route into Lombardy. Early in December he was in front of the Ghibeline city of Brescia, and his men shot arrows into it, but could not enter. Making his way as far as possible by Guelfic towns and lordships he reached Ferrara, where he was joined by about 1,400 men brought by the lord Uberto Pallavicini. From Ferrara the road was open through the Papal State into Apulia, where Manfred had collected his forces, of whom by far the most valuable part were Saracens and some German horse, to receive him.

Charles opposed by Manfred at Grandella, Feb. 26, 1266.

On the field of Grandella, near Benevento, the two armies met. The Saracens did great damage with their arrows, till the French mounted men-at-arms charged and dispersed them. Manfred's German horse, charging to the battle-cry of 'Swabia', did something to stem the rout, but the soft native soldiery of the south of Italy early gave up the struggle. Manfred himself died on the field. Charles was ungenerous enough to prohibit the burial of his rival in consecrated ground. Manfred was accordingly buried in the open, by the bridge of Benevento, but each soldier of Charles's army in passing cast a stone upon the grave of the dead hero, and so

Manfred killed.

[1] The *Chronicon Parmense* (*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, tome ix, part ix), p. 25, gives the usual mediaeval number of 60,000. It is unlikely that Charles's forces when he set out would be more than two or three thousand.

raised a mound to his memory. Even this form of burial displeased the implacable Clement IV, who could not tolerate that Manfred should be buried in the land of the Church, as he deemed the kingdom of Naples and Sicily to be. So, acting under orders, the Archbishop of Cosenza had the body dug up, and interred with candles extinguished, as at the burial of one under excommunication, on the northern border of the kingdom.

> When by two mortal blows
> My frame was shatter'd, I betook myself
> Weeping to him, who of free will forgives.
> My sins were horrible: but so wide arms
> Hath goodness infinite, that it receives
> All who turn to it. Had this text divine
> Been of Cosenza's shepherd better scann'd,
> Who then by Clement on my hunt was set,
> Yet at the bridge's head my bones had lain,
> Near Benevento, by the heavy mole
> Protected; but the rain now drenches them,
> And the wind drives, out of the kingdom's bounds
> Far as the stream of Verde, where, with lights
> Extinguish'd, he removed them from their bed.
> (*Purgatorio* iii. 115–28, Cary's Translation.)

Charles energetically followed up his victory, and gained possession of the whole kingdom. The Pope had triumphed. The Ghibeline cause in Italy was ruined. But in the process Italy had once more to experience the evil state of a country exposed to foreign invasion and internal war. The name of King Charles soon came to be execrated throughout Sicily.

Charles gains Sicily.

One great attempt was yet to be made by the Ghibeline party to re-establish the imperial cause. Conradin, the son of the dead Conrad IV, who had been brought up in Swabia, was a young man of great spirit and resolution. In the year which followed the battle of Grandella

Conradin takes up the Ghibelines' cause.

news was often brought to him from Italy of the tyranny of the French in Naples, and of the yearning of all the Ghibelines for the coming of Conradin. Large promises of support were made to him, and money was advanced to furnish German troops. In the spring of 1268 he entered Italy, but had great difficulty in keeping his forces together, as the money of the Ghibelines soon gave out, and he had to pawn his property to the merchants to pay his men. He marched by Verona and Pavia, then through part of Tuscany to Pisa, which tended to be Ghibeline because Florence was Guelf. The Roman people received him with open arms, and when he entered the country of the Abruzzi his forces were superior in number to those which King Charles could bring to meet him. Nevertheless, by the superior generalship of the French Alard de St. Valery, the army of Conradin was overthrown at the battle of Tagliacozzo on August 23, 1268. This battle, following so soon after the defeat and death of Manfred at Grandella, brought to an end the long political connexion between Germany and Italy. The foreigner had certainly not brought peace to Italy: well might the great poet of the Middle Ages, in his vision of the lower world, exclaim upon the terrible spectacle that would ensue,

Conradin defeated at Tagliacozzo.

> If in one band
> Collected, stood the people all, who e'er
> Poured on Apulia's happy soil their blood.

Dante regretted the passing of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, the treachery which 'branded the Apulian name', and ruined Manfred's cause at Grandella, and the fatal field—

> Where beyond
> Thy walls, O Tagliacozzo, without arms
> The old Alardo conquered.

To Dante Charles of Anjou was a scourge, who

> For amends,
> Young Conradin an innocent victim slew.

The execution at Naples of this noble prince, aged only sixteen, shocked even the courtiers of King Charles. Under the Hohenstaufen the south of Italy had displayed some of the highest civilization known up till then in Europe. Greek and the medical art had been studied; in architecture there had been works of rare splendour and beauty. Dante says that 'whatever the most eminent of the Latins (i. e. the Italians) brought forth in their time [the reigns of Frederick II and Manfred] came to light first in the court of such great monarchs'. South Italy, under the grinding rule of Charles, had no such fame; and though in time it shook off his tyranny, it never recovered its old brilliance.

Under Charles Southern Italy loses her pre-eminence in art and learning.

After the battle of Tagliacozzo Charles of Anjou reigned for eighteen years. During this time he gradually rose to be one of the greatest monarchs in Europe. His dominions formed a great Mediterranean Empire, which bade fair to rival the power of his predecessor, the Hohenstaufen Frederick II. But at the end of fifteen years of successful rule a catastrophe occurred, which quickly mined the great edifice that the able but unscrupulous Angevin had built up.

Charles becomes a great monarch.

The first task of Charles after Tagliacozzo was to consolidate his power in the 'Two Sicilies', as the kingdom of Naples and Sicily has since been called. When the elements of resistance had been crushed throughout the south of Italy and the island of Sicily, he was able to turn his attention to Tuscany and the north. Florence was the dominant power in Tuscany. The battle of Montcaperto in 1260 had for a time given the Guelfic

ITALY
ABOUT
1270 — 1490
SCALE
0 50 100 150 Miles
0 50 100 150 200 250 Km.
L. Geneva
R. Rhone
Geneva
Maggiore
Como
Milan
Novara
Vercelli
Lodi
Pavia
Turin
Asti
Piacenza
Tortona
Alessandria
Bergamo
L. Garda
Brescia
Crema
Cremona
Mantua
Trent
Treviso
Vicenza
Verona
Padua
Adige
VENICE
Chioggia
Botzen
FRIULI
Aquileia
Trieste
Pola
Ferrara
Parma
Reggio
Modena
Bologna
Ravenna
Rimini
Ancona
Urbino
Fermo
Camerino
Ascoli
Spoleto
Chieti
Ortona
Viesti
Manfredonia
Ragusa
ADRIATIC SEA
PIEDMONT
DAUPHINE
PROVENCE
NICE
GENOVA
GENOVA
MILAN
VENICE
PAPAL STATE
KING
ROME
Lucca
FLORENCE
Pisa
Meloria
Volterra
Siena
Arezzo
Perugia
Orvieto
Viterbo
Elba
Bastia
Corsica
Ostia
Cassino

TYRRHENIAN
SEA
SARDINIA
Cagliari
Capua
Naples
Salerno
Benevento
Brindisi
Taranto
Otranto
Policastro
Paola
Cosenza
Lipari Isles
Palermo
Messina
Reggio
SICILY
Catania
Modica
H. S. Hatton
Oxford

party supreme power in it, but the successes of Charles of Anjou in the south of Italy reversed the position of parties nearly everywhere. The Guelfs returned to Florence, and gave up to King Charles of Sicily the 'lordship' of their city. Charles sent Guy de Montfort (one of the two sons of the English Earl Simon) to represent him in Florence; through the papal authority he himself held the position of 'imperial vicar'—that is, representative of the Emperor—in Tuscany, and by the year 1277 even Milan and other great Lombard cities had acknowledged him as lord. From Lombardy his power extended through Romagna (where he had the 'lordship' of Bologna), and on the other side of Italy, in Piedmont, several of the lords had acknowledged him as superior since his first coming into Italy. When in 1281 the Romans made him sole senator of the city, his power in Italy was more widespread and imposing than ever had been that of Frederick II.

In 1272 Charles is said to have used his influence over his brother Louis IX of France to prevent the King from taking the French crusading army to Palestine, and to divert it instead to the fruitful Sultanate of Tunis. There the army languished and King Louis ended his life. The French army was withdrawn, but before doing so made terms with the Sultan by which the tribute which Tunis had formerly paid to the kingdom of Sicily should be renewed. Charles was present in this ill-fated expedition, and such military success as it achieved was due to his energy.

Having thus opened up political relations with the Sultan, Charles was able to gain concessions for commerce; thus a brisk trade was re-established between Sicily and Tunis. He also had an alliance with the Sultan Bibars, the founder of the Mameluke rule in

Egypt. Egypt and Tunis were the terminal points of great trade-routes from the Red Sea and from Africa. The gold and other precious wares of Africa and of the East were thus made accessible to Europe, being brought by the Italian ships across the Mediterranean. In the general prosperity which ensued Charles's Sicilian kingdom had for a time the greatest share. Extending even further, Charles crossed the Adriatic, became Lord of Albania, Achaia, and of the Morea, where the Byzantine Empire had now little power. He was on the point of taking a great armament against that Empire, to establish himself in Constantinople, and so to hold the keys of East and West, when suddenly the storm broke and shattered the great edifice of his power.

Conspiracy against Charles.

For years there had been great though suppressed discontent in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily. The control of the French knights of Charles was highly distasteful to the people. In spite of the thriving commerce of the kingdom, the taxes levied to support Charles's great designs were heavy and oppressive. By 1280 his rule had degenerated into sheer tyranny, the administration of his Provençal nobles into unbridled licence. Even in the early years of Charles's rule the French Pope, Clement IV, had protested to Charles against the evil men whom he had put into office: 'Abduction and adultery mark these men no less than theft and exaction.' With the greatest skill and secrecy a conspiracy was organized throughout Sicily by John of Procida, who had been physician to Frederick II. John was supported by Michael Palaeologus, the Byzantine Emperor, whom Charles had thought to conquer, and by King Peter of Aragon, who had married Constance the daughter of Manfred. Pope Nicholas III, whose sympathies were Ghibeline, countenanced and financed

the conspiracy. In Barcelona Peter of Aragon collected a fleet, and prepared to invade the kingdom of Naples. These preparations, however, could not be kept secret, and Charles was already taking measures to deal with them when he was anticipated by the 'Sicilian Vespers', an event with which Procida and his conspirators had no connexion.

Sicilian Vespers.

On Easter Tuesday, March 31, 1282, the people of Palermo had gone to a church, half a mile out in the country, and after the service were making merry outside when they met with a party of French horse. The soldiers began to mix with the people, and to speak to the Sicilian women. In such circumstances, among such a people, passionate anger is easily roused, knives are quickly drawn. A young bride is said to have been insulted by a French soldier. A young Sicilian rushed forward and stabbed the soldier. At once a cry arose, 'Death to the French!' and within a brief time not a single soldier was left alive. The news spread to Palermo. The populace rose. Two thousand French are said to have perished that evening, their bodies being thrown together in a pit. The conspiracy which John of Procida had so carefully prepared now bore fruit. Taking advantage of the rising in Palermo, the conspirators raised the standard of revolt generally, and soon the whole island was lost to Charles of Anjou. The energetic king made great efforts to recover his dominion, but the fleet of King Peter of Aragon came to support the rebels. In 1284 the Spanish and Neapolitan fleets met; Charles's fleet was scattered, his son captured. A year later King Charles himself died. In 1288 his son was ransomed from captivity. The upshot of the protracted war was that the island of Sicily was dismembered from the kingdom of Naples. Sicily

March 31, 1282.

Charles loses Sicily.

His fleet lost. 1285. Charles dies.

Dismemberment of

his kingdom.

became an independent kingdom under a cadet branch of the Aragonese family, in the person of Frederick, younger son of King Peter. Naples remained under the Angevin line, under Charles II, the son of the first Charles of Anjou. Angevin Naples was Guelfic, Aragonese Sicily was Ghibeline. Thus the magnificent Empire of the first Charles was dismembered. Two small South Italian kingdoms were set up; the artistic and intellectual brilliance of the south disappeared with the tyranny of King Charles I, and with the carnage of the Sicilian Vespers.

Progress in Northern Italy. Florence.

If the latter half of the thirteenth century saw the decline of South Italy, it saw on the other hand the beginning at any rate of the remarkable progress which was to continue in the cities of Middle and North Italy till the glories of the Renaissance were reached. No history is more brilliant than that of Florence, the lovely city of Tuscany, set on the banks of the Arno, encircled by its glorious hills.

Guelfs in power.

The coming of Charles of Anjou reversed the decision of the battle of Monteaperto. With Charles the Guelfic star was once more in the ascendant, the Guelfic families returned to Florence. Their chief support came from the middle class and lesser people of the city, just as the Ghibeline party drew its strength mainly from the patrician interest. Accordingly the return of the Guelfic party in 1266 was followed at once by a remodelling of the Constitution, so as to gain for the people a greater share in the management of the city.

Florence, *Primo Popolo*, 1250. The Constitution.

Already in 1250, when Frederick II was dying and the Ghibeline cause failing, the Guelfic or popular party had established what is known as the First Popular Government of Florence. Before this the chief magistrate was the Podestà, who was the nominee of the

nobles. By the Constitution of 1250 the Podestà was retained, but he was counterbalanced by a new magistrate, the Captain of the People, representing the popular party, the *popolani*, as against the nobles. Both Podestà and Captain of the People held office only for one year, and they were not to be natives of Florence. They acted as judges, and as military leaders. Twelve Elders or *Anziani* of the People formed a central representative body, to preside over the whole city, and to prevent its falling into two parts under the Podestà and Captain of the People.

Two parties.

Nevertheless Florence did consist of two parts, firstly the nobles or *grandi*, the rich ancient families, and secondly the people (*popolani*), those who engaged in trade, and often therefore called the *arti* (trade-gilds).

The *Grandi*.

The *grandi* or nobles had formed the first independent government of Florence, when after the death of the famous Matilda, Countess of Tuscany, in 1115, the city was able to separate itself off from the feudal Marquisate or County. This independent government, the municipal corporation of noble *consuls*, was the *Commune*, a name which, though often applied to the whole city, really means the original civic or municipal corporation, consisting only of nobles. After 1250 therefore the patrician *Commune* still went on, represented by the Podestà, while the *popolani* also became a political body, represented by the Captain of the People.

The Commune.

The *Popolani*.

Change in the Constitution.

In 1266 the Guelfs again changed the Constitution in the direction of more popular control. Charles of Anjou was now Lord of Florence, but the position gave him little real power, other than to nominate the Podestà, the head magistrate of the nobles. But the nobles were no longer very important in Florence. They did not engage in trade, their only serious work was fighting.

They were thus rapidly falling outside the main current of Italian life. The real interests of the citizens were in peace and commerce. Inside the city were their workshops and selling booths; outside, by the new business of banking, and by dealing in the wares of distant lands, they were becoming more and more involved in an opulent life of commerce, more and more wedded to peace. The city nobles were out of date. Their lofty square towers, which frowned along the narrow streets, were reduced by statute to a maximum height of seventy-five feet. The most important class was now no longer the nobles but the well-to-do burghers, the *popolo grasso*, the merchants and bankers, many of them having formerly been nobles who had given up their titles and engaged in trade. The rich burghers, a sort of upper middle class, were the real power in the city. Besides them there were the less well-to-do classes, the *popolo minuto*. It was over the combined *popolo—grasso* and *minuto*—that the Captain of the People presided.

Popolo Grasso in power.

Popolo Minuto.

The administration of the city continued to be shared by the Podestà, at the head of the Commune, and the Captain, at the head of the People. Each official was assisted by special councils of his own. But the *popolani* were the chief power. For from them, by the Constitution of 1266, were elected Twelve Worthies, as an advisory Council to the Podestà; and also one Hundred Worthies of the People, as a legislative body or Parliament, whose assent was required for the passing of any statute. Thus Florence came to possess a comparatively democratic Council and Parliament, of both of which bodies, however, it must be remembered, the *popolo grasso*, the rich burghers, rather than the *popolo minuto*, had control. But the Constitution, as a whole, was now distinctly popular and democratic. It still consisted of two parts,

The Council and Parliament.

the Commune and the People. But while no noble could be elected to the Council of the People, any plebeian or non-noble was eligible for the Council of the Commune.

The foundations of a strong independent civic democracy were thus laid. The brilliant history of Florence was made possible by freedom, for every citizen felt himself a part of the community, and shared in its dignity and greatness. Equally important with the Constitution was the development of the Gild-system. The trades and traders of Florence were from the year 1266 organized in seven great Gilds or *Arti*. Each Gild was, so far as its own trade was concerned, a self-governing community. Its members were bound to trade according to its rules, and were punished by fines if they did not observe them. The rules were strict. The great Calimala Gild, for instance, controlled the valuable trade of cloth-dressing. From England, Flanders, France, cloth came to be dyed and finished. The Calimala Gild contained all the dyers and finishers. They alone were instructed in the secret processes by which the fine Florentine dyes were produced. All cloth sent out with the Gild's trade-mark was guaranteed to be of just measure and quality. The strictest probity was enforced on the Gild members: if a fine was imposed but not paid, the recalcitrant was expelled by the Consuls of the Gild. As expulsion meant practically the inability to trade in Florence, the penalty was sufficiently severe. The great Florentine gilds were known all over Europe. In each country they maintained resident Consuls, to look after the interests of their members trading to foreign parts and to represent them before foreign Governments. The merchants of Florence became men of substance and experience. They travelled abroad; they arranged

The Gild-system.

The Merchants of Florence.

treaties, carried on negotiations with kings and princes. Men of the world—travelled, educated as they were—they were citizens of no mean city at home. Their interests were no longer in war, but in peace, in commerce, in embellishing their homes and their city, in cultivating art, literature, and whatever is beautiful. It was amid such circumstances that the youth of Dante was spent.

Dante. Dante Alighieri was born in Florence in 1265, being sprung from an old burgher family of the city which he loved so well. He was not brought up to any particular profession, but was given the best education which those times afforded. He studied hard and became a master of mediaeval learning—theology, astronomy, arithmetic, and history. The scope of his reading was immense. Mediaeval theory divided true learning into two branches: the Trivium—grammar, dialectic, rhetoric; the Quadrivium—arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy. The works which he subsequently wrote prove that he had complete mastery of all these. It is this breadth and depth of learning which constitute much of the great interest as well as the difficulty of his works: so many abstruse sciences are referred to, so many authors quoted, such deep trains of thought developed with all the severity of scholastic logic. Aristotle and Plato (both of whom he read in Latin translations), Cicero, and, above all, Vergil, were his great teachers; these and the great St. Thomas Aquinas, the intellectual pillar of the mediaeval church. But the magnificent heritage of classical and mediaeval thought would not alone have given that massive quality which marks the great Florentine's work: his natural genius made him the equal of all the masters. His lofty soul had felt all the sorrows of the world, his powerful intellect had pondered all the deepest problems of life.

His education

His learning.

Severe study, strength of intellect, unbounded sympathy have made Dante one of the supreme figures of the world's history.

Dante in Florence.

As a young man he was singularly cheerful and happy. He bore his immense learning with ease; it was said of him that no one would have suspected him of deep studies, so joyous were his looks and his conversation. He had few masters to instruct him, and never went to the University. Unlike most mediaeval scholars who travelled from university to university, Dante appears to have spent the first thirty-five years of his life in Florence, pursuing his studies, writing light verses, and taking part in the political life of the city. It is possible that this immobility in his early life was more favourable to continuous study than were the wandering habits of the scholars of the time. For the rest of his life Dante was to have sufficient travelling.

Origin of party feuds.

It was the feuds of the Guelfs and Ghibelines which brought misfortune to Dante, and made him an exile from his beloved Florence. In 1215 Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti, of a noble Florentine family, was betrothed to a lady of the house of Amidei. But he broke his troth and married a lady of the Donati family. For this he was attacked and killed by men of the families of Amidei and Uberti beside the Ponte Vecchio, on the right bank of the Arno.

> O Buondelmonte! what ill counseling
> Prevail'd on thee to break the plighted bond?
> Many who now are weeping, would rejoice
> Had God to Ema given thee, the first time
> Thou near our city camest. But so was doom'd:
> Florence! on that maimed stone which guards the bridge,
> The victim, when thy peace departed, fell.[1]

[1] *Paradiso* xvi. 140 ff. (Cary's Translation). The Ema was a

This was the origin of the party strifes of Florence. The families in the Buondelmonti interest became Guelf, the rest Ghibeline. Dante naturally was familiar with these strifes from his youth. Although, owing to his sympathy with the Mediaeval Empire, which had passed away, he is often considered to have been a Ghibeline, his family actually belonged to the Guelfic party. Five years before his birth the battle of Monteaperto had been fought, where the Florentine Ghibelines and their allies had scattered the Guelfs. Dante's family, however, was apparently not sufficiently distinguished to be exiled with the rest. After Charles of Anjou's successes in Italy the Guelfic party returned to power in Florence, but its success was not unchequered. In 1284, it is true, the position of Guelfic Florence was greatly strengthened by the fact that the Pisans received a terrible defeat at sea, off the island of Meloria, from the Genoese. Pisa was a predominantly Ghibeline city, and as it commanded the lower valley of the Arno was also a serious rival to Florence in trade and commerce. It had had a brilliant history till then, the Pisan merchants and sailors having shown great enterprise in opening up trade in the Levant, and in Syria after the First Crusade (1096–9). But the city never completely recovered from the destruction of her navy off Meloria on August 6, 1284. To-day it is only a beautiful, half-dead city, its great cathedral, baptistery, and leaning tower, grouped so picturesquely in a corner of the town upon a large grass square, showing still much of the glory and majesty of the Middle Ages.

Guelfs and Ghibelines in Florence.

Pisa.

Her navy defeated by Genoa.

But the Guelfs in Florence had to meet a new danger

stream which Buondelmonte had to cross, coming from Montebuono to Florence. The maimed stone was the remains of a statue of Mars, near which Buondelmonte was killed, like a sacrificial victim.

in 1289. The fall of the Angevin power in the island of Sicily had weakened the Guelfic prestige everywhere in Italy. On June 11, 1289, the Ghibelines collected from the Tuscan cities met in battle the Guelfs of Florence and their allies at Campaldino, where Dante himself, then twenty-four years old, is said to have taken part. The Guelfs were victorious; never again did the Ghibelines recover their power in Florence, which was from this time the predominant city in Tuscany. More than this, the defeat of her rivals left her mistress of the great stream of commerce which flowed across Central Italy; traders, travellers, and then scholars naturally visited the mistress of the Arno valley. Wealth, intellectual and artistic culture, thus contributed together to make the greatness of Florence.

Battle of Campaldino.

Guelfs victorious in Florence.

For the next ten years Dante lived and studied in Florence, and wrote the *Vita Nuova*, the touching story of his love for Beatrice. At the end of this period misfortune came upon him. In 1282 the Florentines had amended their Constitution, adding yet another group of magistrates to the already numerous body of civic officials. The new magistrates were the Priors of the six chief trade-gilds — the Calimala, the Money Changers, the Woollen Gild, the Doctors and Druggists, the Silkweavers and Mercers, the Skinners and Furriers. The Priors were only elected for two months at a time; during their term of office they lived at the public expense in the *Badia*, which they did not leave till their two months were completed.

Dante writes the *Vita Nuova*.

Constitution of Florence amended.

Dante was a member of the Gild of Doctors and Druggists, which he had entered, probably, only for the purpose of taking part in politics. From June 15 to August 15 he was one of the Priors. A severe strife of parties was raging again in Florence, not between Guelfs

1300.

and Ghibelines, but within the Guelfic party itself. This was now divided in Florence into *Bianchi* and *Neri*, Whites and Blacks. The Blacks were the more aristocratic faction, and were headed by the ancient family of Donati. The Whites were more sympathetic to the burghers, being headed by the great mercantile family of Cerchi. The contests between Whites and Blacks grew so bitter that in 1300 the Priors, among whom was Dante, banished them from the city. When the Priors went out of office the factions returned to Florence, and commenced their contests again. The Blacks were specially bitter against the Priors who had exiled them. They appealed to Pope Boniface VIII to intervene in Florence. Boniface was ambitious to revive the temporal greatness of the Papacy, and to bring Tuscany within the State of the Church. On the advice of Carso Donati, the Black leader, he called in Charles of Valois, the brother of Philip le Bel, to make peace in Tuscany, under the authority of the Pope, offering him, it is said, the imperial crown. On All Saints' Day, 1301, Charles of Valois entered Florence. The Blacks had triumphed, and proceeded at once to vengeance. Among those who were sentenced to exile was Dante, on January 27, 1302. He left his native city and never saw it more.

Parties of Bianchi and Neri among Guelfs.

Pope Boniface calls in Charles of Valois to restore order.

Dante exiled.

For the rest of his life Dante was a wanderer, conceiving his great visions, and writing his immortal verse. Although joined by misfortune to the White Guelfs, he refused to take part in their schemes of revenge; shaking himself loose from these political connexions, he gave himself up to literature. Politically he became a kind of philosophic Ghibeline—not a party man indeed, but a thinker who looked to a revival of the Mediaeval Empire, when some great sovereign should give peace to Italy, reducing the jarring factions to unison, but leaving all the

free states and cities to flourish in their self-government. It is of such an empire that he wrote in the *De Monarchia*; and such an emperor he hoped to find in Henry of Luxemburg.

His *De Monarchia.*

His wanderings.

To trace the wanderings of Dante would give an interesting picture of life in the Middle Ages, which, in spite of wars, were wonderfully cosmopolitan; a man of learning and talent was at home everywhere. Sympathetic and cultivated nobles took him into their castles, in Lombardy, Tuscany, and Romagna; and for this the names of Scarpetto degli Ordelaffi, of Moroello Malaspina, of Bartolommeo and Can Grande della Scala, and of Guido da Polenta, his last friend, at Ravenna, are to be honoured. He stayed at intervals at certain of the great universities, continuing his studies, and probably, with the licence of the authorities, opening a lecture-room, as scholars did then to maintain themselves for the time being. Thus Bologna, Padua, Paris, and even, tradition says, Oxford had Dante among their members. The della Scala of Verona were his most constant hosts, and at their court he had leisure and means to compose parts of his great works. At Verona he was honoured, and as happy as an exile may be.

> Thou shalt prove
> How salt the savour is of other's bread;
> How hard the passage, to descend and climb,
> By other's stairs.
>
> (*Paradiso* xvii. 57.)

Dante at Ravenna.

The last three years of his life were spent at Ravenna. In that ancient, half-Italian, half-Byzantine city, with its great churches and wide prospects of the surrounding country, the great poet lived with his two sons and his daughter. He died on September 14, 1321, and lies buried in the Lady Chapel of the Franciscan Church of San Piero Maggiore.

His death.

In the *Vita Nuova*, a small work of extreme beauty, Dante has told the story of his love for Beatrice, which is the motive running through his later work, the *Divina Commedia*. The *Vita Nuova* is a simple story, written in the native Italian tongue, partly prose, partly short poems. It opens in prose: 'In that part of the book of my memory, before the which is little that can be read, there is a rubric, saying, *Incipit Vita Nuova*. Under such rubric I find written many things: and among them the words which I purpose to copy into this little book; if not all of them, at the least their substance.' By this Dante shows that while still young, when memory was only just beginning, a *new life* opened for him, when he first saw Beatrice. Yet even in this simple story Dante cannot refrain from expressing his thoughts occasionally in an involved phrase, such as often baffles readers in his later works: 'Nine times already since my birth had the heaven of light returned to the self-same point almost, as concerns its own revolution, when first the glorious Lady of my mind was made manifest to mine eyes.' This is Dante's poetic way, suitable on this occasion because of its beautiful imagery, of saying that he was just under nine years old when first he saw Beatrice. But to describe her age he goes beyond poetic imagery, and embarks on mathematics: 'She had already been in this life for so long as that, within her time, the starry heaven had moved towards the Eastern quarter one of the twelve parts of a degree.' This, he explains, means that she was just over eight years old. The impression which was made thus early upon Dante was cherished by him throughout his life. He only saw Beatrice two or three times; it is doubtful if he ever spoke to her. She married, and died in 1290. Dante himself married Gemma Donati in 1292, and the marriage seems to have been

The *Vita Nuova*.

Beatrice.

completely happy. The memory of Beatrice, however, remained as a kind of ideal, an ideal of beauty and goodness, which was an inspiration for all his work. Every poet writes in view of some ideal, some noble conception. Sometimes this ideal is conceived simply as beauty or truth. Sometimes it is conceived in a religious form, as God. Dante gave his ideal a concrete expression as Beatrice. His vivid imagination, his passion for what was good and beautiful, would not allow him to leave his ideal as something vague and abstract. He therefore clothed it in a beautiful form and called it Beatrice.

The *Divina Commedia*.

The *Divina Commedia*, the great epic of the Middle Ages, was composed in the course of Dante's wanderings. It is generally held that the work occupied the last ten years of his life. In it are contained the learning, the poetry, the history, the exalted religious feeling, of the Middle Ages. It is not a work looking forward to the Renaissance: Dante's learning was Latin, and his mind was deeply religious. Though owing much to Greek thought, especially to Aristotle, he had to rely on Latin translations. But it is Vergil that is his great master, with whom alone he is worthy to be compared in beauty of verse, and in breadth and depth of feeling. In learning Dante is immeasurably greater. He seems to have mastered all the immense heritage of learning which the industrious scholastics of the Middle Ages had accumulated.

The poem was called by Dante a Comedy (the epithet Divine was added only in the sixteenth century), because, though 'in the beginning it is horrible and foul, as Hell, in the end it is prosperous, desirable, pleasing, as Paradise'. The scheme of the work is the adventures of Dante himself in the spiritual world: he conceives himself as lost in a gloomy forest and beset by wild beasts.

From them he flees and meets Vergil, who saves him, and promises to show him first Hell, then Purgatory, and that finally he shall be conducted by Beatrice into Paradise. The majestic story, thus begun, moves in the beautiful *terza rima*, ushering in the great men of the past, of Scripture and ancient history, and of the Middle Ages. So great is the learning conveyed in the splendid epic that the Italians have since developed a national literature of pure commentary upon it.

Rome, with all its associations of imperial and classic greatness, has been throughout the ages a beacon to the Italian people, guiding them back again to a state of unity and national development. The other great centre of attraction is the common inheritance of Dante, who composed the greatest poem of the Middle Ages, one of the greatest works of all time, in the common Italian tongue. But great men are more than national: and the citizen whom Florence cast out to become a citizen of the world has achieved a work which has something in it of all the qualities which made the works of Homer, Vergil, Milton great. As history, philosophy, poetry, and as a religious message, the *Commedia*, coming at the end of the ages of faith, is their greatest and their final achievement.

CHAPTER III

HENRY OF LUXEMBURG

Henry VII. THE coming of Henry VII, King of the Romans, from Germany, was awaited with the highest hopes by all patriotic Italians, with whom the tradition of the Holy Roman Empire was almost part of their religion. It was from beyond the Alps that a saviour was expected. The absorption of the first two Habsburg monarchs, Rudolf and Albert, in German affairs was held by Dante to be mere selfishness.

> Just judgment from the stars fall on thy blood,
> And be it strange and manifest to all;
> Such as may strike thy successor[1] with dread;
> For that thy sire and those have suffered thus,
> Through greediness of yonder realms[2] detain'd
> The garden of the empire[3] to run waste.
> Come, see the Capulets and Montagues,
> The Fillipeschi and Monaldi, man
> Who carest for nought! those sunk in grief, and those
> With dire suspicion rack'd. Come, cruel one!
> Come and behold the oppression of the nobles,
> And mark their injuries; and thou mayest see
> What safety Santafiore[4] can supply.
> Come and behold thy home, who calls on thee,
> Desolate widow, day and night with moans,
> 'My Caesar, why dost thou desert my side?'

[1] Henry VII, the successor of Albert, who is addressed in this passage.

[2] The States of Germany. [3] Italy.

[4] Between Pisa and Siena. Why Santafiore is thus singled out is unknown.

In October 1310 Henry VII arrived in Italy. Two centuries of rivalry between Empire and Papacy seemed forgotten. The papal legate accompanied Henry in his progress. The Pope himself, Clement V, did not reside in the Holy City, nor in Italy at all, but at Avignon in Provence. Yet he was all the more anxious not to depend entirely upon the French monarchy, and therefore welcomed and supported the design of Henry VII in coming to Italy. 'The Pope became a Ghibeline.' Comes to Italy approved by the Pope.

Henry descended into Italy by the Mont Cenis Pass, and entered peacefully into the cities of Turin, Asti, Vercelli, Novara, and then approached the proud city of Milan, the greatest stronghold of the Guelfic party. On December 23 the city opened its gates to him. Henry lodged in the Archbishop's palace, spent Christmas there, and was crowned with the Iron Crown of Lombardy in the great church of St. Ambrose, on January 6. At the coronation he made 199 knights, including Mafeo Visconti, belonging to a family which was later to rule in Milan. Henry's lofty ideals made him act as peacemaker wherever he went: 'he hated the names of Guelf and Ghibeline, and threw the supreme imperial power over everything.' Milan, Pavia, Brescia, Cremona, Mantua, Parma, Piacenza, Lodi are mentioned in the Chronicle of Parma as having been pacified by him. The peace did not last long however; the Milanese could not long bear the presence of the German soldiers and the exercise of imperial power. An insurrection broke out in February, which was only quelled with considerable bloodshed. Enters many towns peacefully. 1310. Revolt of Milan.

The revolt of Milan was at once followed by other Ghibeline towns, which disliked the presence of imperial vicars. The revolts were quelled, but with difficulty. Brescia was besieged three months before it opened its gates. Henry was poor, and fined the city heavily. He 1311.

borrowed freely from the great families of the city, and bartered away the imperial rights. Genoa and Pisa welcomed the Emperor, but Guelfic Florence would have nothing to do with his envoys. So the year 1311 passed away. Henry was still in Lombardy. Next year he advanced slowly towards Rome, which he reached in June 1312, but found Prince John, brother of King Robert of Naples, in possession. After some fighting Henry gained admission to the ancient city, but St. Peter's and the part across the Tiber, the Trastevere, remained in the hands of the Neapolitans. He was therefore crowned Emperor by a commission of cardinals, on June 29 in St. John Lateran, a magnificent church truly, but not the equal in historic associations of the mother church, St. Peter's.

Florence keeps aloof.

1312.

Henry gains admission to Rome.

His coronation.

No German expedition could ever long remain in Rome in the heats of summer. In July Henry left the Holy City. The ancient and loyal Ghibeline city of Pisa was henceforth to be his head-quarters. But the high hopes with which he had come to Italy were never fulfilled. The kingdom of Naples was Guelfic; Florence continued to deny the Emperor's power. The ban of the Empire, solemnly pronounced against them, was of no avail. A year of petty warfare brought no advantage to the imperial cause. A summer campaign in Tuscany taxed the Emperor's strength beyond endurance. He died on August 24, 1313, at Buonconvento, and all Italy realized that one of the most impressive figures in history had passed away.

Henry's death.

The hopes with which his coming had been hailed were all unfulfilled. The Mediaeval Empire, with its glorious aspirations, had passed away. Peace and unity were not to come to Italy from the outside. In April 1311 Dante, 'by the stream of Sarni' in Tuscany, had

Dante's hopes of Henry.

addressed a letter to Henry, in whom his dreams of a great peace-giving monarch seemed about to be fulfilled. 'God in his infinite love has borne witness, that Peace has been bequeathed to us, so that by its wonderful sweetness our harsh strifes might grow mild, and in using it we might merit the joys of the triumphant Fatherland.' Hatred, and the enemy of mankind, he says, had brought misery upon the land, through the absence of its defender. But now hope of a new life had come to Latium, and the rule of Saturn, the *Saturnia regna*, which Vergil had sung of, would return to the earth. 'In you we believe and hope, asserting that you are the minister of God, the son of the Church, the Promoter of the Roman glory. For I, who write both for myself and for others, have seen you, as becomes the Imperial majesty, most benign, and have heard of you, most merciful, when my hands touched your feet, and my lips paid their due service.'

De Monarchia.

It seems to have been about the time of Henry's expedition that Dante wrote his treatise *De Monarchia*. In this he argues that peace and unity are the greatest blessings that mankind can enjoy; that Christ himself chose a time when the world was at peace and under one emperor, Augustus, to come and bring his Gospel to the earth. 'The above reasons having all been laid down, a memorable experience further testifies; namely, that condition of mortal men, which the Son of God when about to take upon himself manhood for the salvation of men, either waited for, or ordained at the desired time.' Pursuing his lofty train of thought, Dante insists with a sweet reasonableness on the blessings of peace, to be obtained under an impartial and universal government. Not that he would exclude national states: liberty is the greatest gift conferred by God on men.

Free states will exist under the imperial monarch, but when they differ they must submit to his judgement.

Machiavelli.

The longing for a monarch who would bring peace and unity remained among great Italians till the end of the Middle Ages. In 1513 another Florentine, Nicolo Machiavelli, was writing his work on 'The Prince', and his closing words eloquently testify, like those of the still greater Florentine who wrote the *De Monarchia*, to the longing of all true Italians for a single ruler: 'What door would be closed to him? Who would refuse obedience to him? What envy would hinder him? What Italian would refuse him homage?' His final word is a quotation from Petrarch:

> Virtue against fury shall advance the fight,
> And it i' th' combat soon shall put to flight;
> For the old Roman valour is not dead,
> Nor in th' Italians' brests extinguishèd.[1]
>
> Virtù contro a furore
> Prenderà l'arme; e fia el combatter corto;
> Chè l'antico valore
> Nelli italici cor non è ancor morto.
>
> PETRARCH, *Canzone* 'Italia mia etc.', Stanza vi, vv. 13–16.

[1] From Dacres's translation of Machiavelli (1640). The quotations on p. 61 are from Milman's *Latin Christianity* (ed. 1883), vol. vii, p. 307.

CHAPTER IV

LOUIS IX, PHILIP III, AND PHILIP IV

THE character of the saintly king Louis IX has been described with great simplicity and charm, and with a wealth of incident, by the Seneschal Joinville.[1] Louis' life was one of complete devotion to the interests of religion, and of his country. He was called 'a monk on the throne', and indeed his unselfishness was the highest realization of the monastic ideal. Yet he was not without a certain worldliness, if one uses that word in a good sense. For he was a diligent administrator, attentive to the details of government, very careful of the temporal interests of the people, for whom he held himself to be responsible to God. Louis IX.

The greatest benefit he conferred on France was the memory of his simple, noble, unselfish life. 'On no day of my life', says Joinville, 'did I ever hear him speak evil of any one', nor was he ever known to use an oath. At table he asked for no food, but ate without remark whatever his cooks put before him. He was kind and courteous to every one, and considerate of their feelings. But if there was any whispering at table he at once stopped it. While untiring in the regular performance of all religious services, he believed in observing the mean, and gave it as his opinion that it was better to be a *preudhomme*—as we should say, 'a thorough His unselfishness.

[1] See Bell, *Mediaeval Europe*, pp. 224 ff.

gentleman'—than a friar. He refused to allow France to be mulcted of undue taxes by the Papacy, and curtly rejected the offer of Pope Gregory IX to make his brother, Robert of Artois, Emperor (1240). Yet he said that the only way in which a layman should dispute theology with a Jew was by running him through with his sword; and he spent the resources of France on two fruitless Crusades, the last of which cost his country the King's life.

Louis' first Crusade.

The first Crusade of Louis IX occupied the years 1248 to 1254, and was directed against Egypt. Part of the year 1250 was spent by the King in captivity among the Emirs of Egypt. The next four years he spent in Palestine, where he tried to strengthen the tottering power of the Franks. In 1266 Louis renewed his scheme of a Crusade. The Pope, Clement IV, showed no enthusiasm for it, nor did the barons of France. Crusades against the Moslems in Syria and Egypt were out of date then: the clock could not be set back. But Louis persisted, and in 1270 had got together a fairly large force, to which his brother, Charles of Anjou, by this time King of Sicily, promised to join himself. The expedition left Aigues-Mortes on July 1, at the hottest period of the year, and was directed not against Syria, but against Tunis, the Sultan of which, Louis believed, was ready for conversion. The climate was too severe for the French army; even modern methods of sanitation would not have prevented sickness from attacking the host. Louis died on August 25, 1270, of dysentery, in the midst of his army in front of the ancient Carthage. King Charles of Sicily arrived with his forces on the same day, and was able to render useful service in taking off what remained of the French army. Joinville himself held that the whole Crusade, even if it had gone to

Louis' second Crusade.

Death of Louis IX.

Palestine, would have been a mistake: 'for at the point at which France then was, all the kingdom was at good peace with itself and with its neighbours, while ever since he departed, the state of the kingdom has done nothing but go from bad to worse.'

Louis' relations with the neighbouring kingdoms had shown his high qualities of statesmanship. He had refused to meddle in the affairs of the Empire and Italy. With England he had made a settlement of the difficult territorial disputes which so often had led to war. There had, indeed, been a short war in 1242, when Louis' army had without much difficulty thrown back the English invasion of Poitou. In 1258 Louis and Henry III made what it was hoped would prove a final settlement of the disputes between England and France concerning the Gascon frontier. Henry III gave up the vain claims to the lands which King John had lost—Normandy, Anjou, Touraine, Maine, Poitou; he retained Guienne, with certain accessions in the dioceses of Limoges, Cahors, Périgueux, and with the promise of Saintonge, if Louis' brother, Alphonse of Poitiers, should die childless. The French barons thought that Louis had made needless concessions. But Louis was honestly desirous of peace: 'The land I am giving him [Henry III] I do not give as a thing that I am bound to give either to himself or to his heirs; but I give it so that there may be love between my children and his, who are cousins-german.'[1] Besides, since the great war between Philip Augustus and King John, the English king had repudiated the homage which formerly had been rendered to the King of France for Gascony and the other fiefs. By the Treaty of Paris, 1259, the English king returned to the ambiguous position of vassal for Guienne. St. Louis

Louis' relations with neighbouring kingdoms.

Louis and Henry III.

[1] Joinville (trans. Marzials), p. 308.

was an able diplomatist, and justly considered this to be a real gain: 'Meseems, that what I give him is given to good purpose, since he has not hitherto been my liegeman, but will now have to do me homage.'[1]

Louis arbitrates between Henry III and the barons.

The relations between Louis IX and England continued amicable till the end of his reign. In 1264 he acted as arbiter between Henry III and the barons, who under the leadership of Simon de Montfort were opposing his system of government. The 'Pact of Amiens' was delivered on January 24, 1284. The decision was in favour of Henry III, and was the result of a straightforward reading of the laws as they then stood. The barons refused to accept the decision, and opened war upon their king. But no one questioned the honesty of Louis' intentions. This was not the first time that Louis had acted as arbiter in disputes between his neighbours. In 1246 he had arbitrated in a disputed succession to the County of Flanders. All Europe venerated the saintly king. The name of France never stood higher. Internally, the Royal Domain had greatly increased, and the great feudatories had been humbled. But when Louis IX died in 1270 he left France to a much inferior ruler.

Philip III le Hardi.

The reign of Philip III le Hardi was undistinguished and even feeble, despite his vigorous-sounding name. Philip was twenty-five years old at his accession, and possessed a strong physique. His father, St. Louis, had brought him up strictly, and Philip had been docile and dutiful. His character seems to have been of rather a negative kind. He was pious and charitable, but had no intellectual interests, and was easily led by his courtiers. With him may be said to begin the long line of favourites who tended to make the French courts

Philip ruled by favourites.

[1] Joinville, ibid.

undignified in the next century. His chief favourite was his physician, Pierre de Broce, who received from the king estates and titles, and seems to have ruled him completely, till the other courtiers were able to compass the favourite's death on a charge of treason in 1278. There appears to have been no satisfactory proof of the charge.

With the accession of Philip III the French, who had been the most notable Crusaders of the Middle Ages, renounced the vain ideal. The 'Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem', reduced to a few fortified towns on the coast, was left to decay. In 1270 the Lord Edward, son of Henry III, King of England, was on Crusade to the Holy Land, and his pre-occupation gave Philip III the opportunity of disposing peacefully of the succession of Alphonse of Poitiers, who died the same year childless. By the Peace of Paris the English king was to get parts of Alphonse's heritage, namely, Saintonge to the south of the river Charente, and the Agenais. After Edward had succeeded to the English throne in 1272 he put forward his claims, but abstained from war. In 1279, by the Treaty of Amiens, he received satisfaction in all points, except the disputed one of Quercy. Indeed, on the Gascon frontier, friction never ceased till the outbreak of the Hundred Years War.

Philip takes the land of Alphonse of Poitiers.

Edward claims his land.

The undistinguished Philip in 1272 seems actually to have been considered as a candidate for the Empire, on the suggestion of his uncle, King Charles of Sicily. But the Electors wisely chose Rudolf of Habsburg. Philip, however, was not averse from adding to his dominions, and actually made an effort to conquer the kingdom of Aragon.

Philip proposed as Emperor.

The war against Aragon displays a feature which was repeated more than once in the following centuries. The

Philip makes war

upon Aragon.

name of a Crusade and the blessing of the Pope was used to cover a mere war of conquest. Already in the struggle between the Emperor Frederick II and the Papacy the name of Crusade had been used with doubtful appropriateness by the Pope. The expedition of Charles of Anjou to Naples in 1264 had been carried out at the invitation of Urban IV, and thus with the authority of Holy Church. Now in 1285 a war, engaged in for purely political purposes, was undertaken as a 'Crusade' by the French crown.

The beginning of the trouble was in 1282, when the rising of the 'Sicilian Vespers' resulted in the loss of the island of Sicily for the Angevin family. King Charles of Naples was uncle of Philip III, and expected to receive support in his efforts to rewin the island, which was falling into the hands of Peter III of Aragon.[1] The expulsion of the Angevin power from Sicily was a blow to the Guelfic cause. Ghibelinism was reviving throughout Italy. Pope Martin IV was a Frenchman, and Guelfic; to check the Ghibeline party he called upon the French king to aid his uncle by an expedition against Peter of Aragon. Martin declared Peter to be no longer king, and he 'offered' Aragon to Philip III. Philip accepted the offer, and in 1285 led a 'Crusade' into Catalonia. The French nobility hoped for another rich conquest, such as Charles of Anjou had made in Naples. Their love of adventure was now the only element of the old Crusading spirit which they retained. But the expedition into Catalonia was a dead failure. The fortress of Gerona covers the road from Southern France to Barcelona. After a siege of over two months it was captured. But pestilence had carried off many in the army, and Philip III himself had fallen ill. On

[1] See pp. 46–7.

September 4, the day before Gerona capitulated, the Aragonese admiral, Roger de Loria, destroyed the French fleet off the islands of *Las Farmiguas* (close to the coast near Gerona). The land army was thus threatened with want of supplies. A retreat was ordered; Philip III died at Perpignan in the Aragonese County of Roussillon, on October 5, 1285.

French fleet destroyed.

Death of Philip III.

The reign of Philip IV le Bel is one of the most important in French history, domestic and foreign. Internally, the mediaeval constitution of France developed in somewhat the same way (but with important differences) as did that of England under Edward I. Externally, there was the momentous conflict with the Papacy. The Church of Rome which had triumphed over the Mediaeval Emperors fell before the grandson of St. Louis. Another event took place also, of tragic interest in the history of Europe, namely, the destruction of the Order of the Templars. The reign of Philip IV has the marks of ruthless severity and tremendous vigour. Yet the king himself gave his contemporaries no such impression. He was, they say, in person handsome, erect, strong. In conversation he was affable; in manners, sober and chaste. But he conveyed no impression at all of great will-power, or relentless purpose, or deep statecraft. There seems to be a complete divergence between the public acts of his reign and his personal character, as it struck those who surrounded him. Yet to subsequent historians he has become odious. In a sense he is the complement of Dante: both come towards the close of the Middle Ages, though the process of closing occupied a hundred and fifty years. Dante is the divine singer, who saw the tremendous pageant of the Middle Ages, who described their glories and their failings, their massive learning, their exalted

Philip IV le Bel, 1285–1314.

Character of Philip IV.

LONDON
ENGLAND
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Alderney
Guernsey
Sark
Channel Islands
Jersey
Cherbourg
Fécamp
Harfleur
Dieppe
Abbeville
Rouen
Caen
Elbeuf
Coutances
Falaise
Avranches
Verneuil
Dreux
Montagne
Morlaix
Brest
St. Malo
Rohan
Rennes
Mayenne
Vannes
Nantes
Belle I.
Angers
Thouars
Poitiers
Châteauroux
Tours
Beaugé
Blois
Loches
St. Aignan
Sancerre
Bourges
Nevers
Auxerre
Avallon
Orléans
Patay
Chartres
PARIS
Melun
Provins
Coulommiers
Sens
Joigny
Troyes
Chaumont
Châtillon
Langres
Vesoul
Dijon
Beaune
Châlons
Poligny
Besançon
Bâle
Berne
Lausanne
Lake of Geneva
Rheims
Châlons
Verdun
Metz
Bar le Duc
Toul
Nancy
Strasburg
Spires
Trèves
Arlon
Sedan
Rethel
Laon
Noyon
Crépy
Beauvais
St. Quentin
Guise
Amiens
Peronne
Crecy
Cambrai
Avesnes
Arras
Lille
St. Pol
Agincourt
Boulogne
Calais
Dover
Nieuport
Dunkirk
Courtrai
St. Omer
Ypres
Tournai
Nivelles
Brussels
Ghent
Bruges
Antwerp
Liège
Namur
Dinant
Cologne
Coblenz
Mainz
R. Meuse
R. Rhine
R. Moselle
R. Somme
R. Scheldt
R. Aisne
R. Marne
R. Seine
R. Loire
R. Cher
R. Doubs
R. Lorraine
R. Rhône
NORMANDY
PARIS
ISLE DE FRANCE
CHAMPAGNE
LORRAINE
ALSACE
BRITTANY
MAINE
ANJOU
TOURAINE
BURGUNDY
FRANCHE COMTÉ
EMPIRE
THE

H.S. Hattin,

Oxford

faith. Philip IV is of another kind: he is modern, and 'Machiavellian'. Sentiment has no place in his policy. Reasons of State are everything with him, and whatever stands in the way of the uniform development of the State must be ruthlessly broken. With Philip IV the Middle Ages begin to crumble, as it were, before their time. Chivalry, Feudalism, the Scholastic University, the Church, he conquers them all, and harnesses them to the chariot of his Government.

Philip IV was too wise to interfere seriously in the quarrels of Guelf and Ghibeline in Italy. The disastrous expedition of his father against Aragon had shown the futility of schemes of foreign conquest. In 1299 he acquiesced in what was already an accomplished fact in South Italy: the division of the kingdom of Charles of Anjou between his son Charles, who remained King of Naples, and Frederick, a cadet of the Aragonese Royal House, who remained King of Sicily. But Pope Boniface VIII, like Martin IV, was Guelfic, and as Martin had done, he appealed to the French crown for help against Ghibeline Sicily. Philip IV had no objection to his brother, Charles of Valois, undertaking the adventure. Charles took 500 knights and men-at-arms into Italy in 1301. In Florence he enabled the Black Guelfs to expel the Whites, among whom was Dante.

Philip sends his brother against Sicily.

> I see the time at hand,
> That forth from France invites another Charles
> To make himself and kindred better known.
> Unarmed he issues, saving with that lance,
> Which the arch-traitor[1] tilted with; and that
> He carries with so home a thrust, as rives
> The bowels of poor Florence. No increase
> Of territory hence, but sin and shame
> Shall be his guerdon. (*Paradiso* xx. 68–76.)

[1] Judas.

A campaign made along with the Neapolitan forces against the Sicilians had no result, and in 1302 Charles of Valois returned to France. France, however, was still considered as the protector of the Guelfs in Italy. The expedition of the Emperor Henry VII was a blow to the French influence, which recovered however after his death in 1313. In 1319–20 Philip of Valois (son of Charles) led another small force of Frenchmen into Italy to aid the Guelfs, without accomplishing anything. But the unfortunate tradition of French interference beyond the Alps was maintained until the days of Charles VIII, when it became for sixty years a settled and disastrous policy.

France supports the Guelfs.

Philip IV was not a great warrior, so that, on the whole, his kingdom enjoyed peace. With England, however, there was a chronic dispute about Guienne; the truth was that there could never be stable peace between the two countries so long as that fruitful wine-land was withheld from the French crown. But for the first twenty years of his reign Edward I had little leisure to undertake serious measures to maintain the old frontier of Guienne. In the continual disputes there between vassal and suzerain the overlord had always the advantage, so that the hold of the English king on the outskirts of Guienne grew always weaker. In 1293 matters came to a head; in the Channel the sailors from the Cinque Ports openly fought with those of Normandy; Philip blamed King Edward for not restraining his subjects, and summoned him to appear as vassal before the Court of Paris. Edward, for peace, entered into negotiations to marry Philip's sister, and delivered up Guienne to the French king, as a proof of good faith, on condition that the Duchy should be restored when the marriage took place. This extraordinary act on Edward's part

Disputes between Philip and Edward I.

Edward loses Guienne.

enabled Philip to get some forts of Guienne into his hands without a blow. He refused to give them up, as Edward had not answered the summons to the Court of Paris. The rest of the Duchy was gradually conquered by Philip's forces between 1294 and 1296. Edward could do little to prevent this, as he was gravely troubled by revolts in Wales and Scotland, and by constitutional questions between the crown, barons, and clergy. A coalition which he arranged with the German king, Adolphus of Nassau, and with princes of the Low Countries accomplished little. Edward's campaign in Flanders in 1297 was practically a failure. Negotiations were therefore undertaken, but dragged on till 1303. By this time Philip IV was engaged in his struggle with the Pope and the Flemish. So he consented to an honourable peace, and restored Guienne so far as it had been in English hands in the year before the war. But the settlement was not likely to be lasting. It actually led up to the great Hundred Years War, little more than thirty years after. Before this took place a short war in 1324, between Charles IV and Edward II, had ended with the loss of more of Guienne. Only a strip of coast from the Charente to the Adour was left to the English: on the south they still held Bayonne; from there the frontier ran through Dax and St. Sever to Libourne, Fronsac, Blaye on the Gironde. Bordeaux was the centre of the English power. Their hold on Guienne was getting weaker every year. It appeared as if the policy of Philip Augustus, Louis IX, Philip III, of bringing all France under the crown, was about to be completely fulfilled. The Hundred Years War deferred this result for another century, but made the result more complete when it came.

Guienne restored.

The Hundred Years War.

The two greatest fiefs which still remained outside the

control of the French crown were Guienne and Flanders. Philip IV went a long way towards absorbing Guienne, but the English resistance, though weak, was persistent, and had latent powers of recovery, finally producing the great reaction against the French advance known as the Hundred Years War. With respect to the other great fief, Philip IV also had much success at first, yet failed finally to achieve his object; Flanders passed outside the French control, and has never since returned. Flanders and Guienne.

Gui de Dampierre, conscious perhaps of the determination of Philip IV to bring his county into closer dependence on the French crown, became friendly to Edward I of England. His whole object seems to have been to avoid difficulties with France and England alike, and to keep his county neutral in the shock of contending states. But to do so was beyond his power. Gui de Dampierre, Count of Flanders.

Flanders was a county of industrial cities, Bruges, Ypres, Ghent, and others; in these the rich merchants, by investing the profits of their industry in land and houses, had become a class of hereditary urban landholders. They formed a caste by themselves in the cities, held charters from the Counts conferring powers of local government upon them, and, by keeping the 'Gild Merchant' of each town exclusively to themselves, held the whole industry of the country in their hands. Between these 'patricians' and the rest of the townspeople there grew up in the thirteenth century feelings of discord and tension: the artisans revolted against the political power of the patricians, and 'struck' against them as employers. In 1280 there was war in the streets between the two classes. 'Patricians' and artisans.

The sympathy of the Count Gui de Dampierre was with the artisans. In 1275 he had gone so far as to abolish the Magistracy of Patricians in Ghent, known as

the XXXIX. But the XXXIX were not easily suppressed. They appealed to the Parlement de Paris, the Court of the Count's overlord, the King of France. The Court declared that their position in Ghent was legal, and they were accordingly re-established. The struggle went on. In 1294 there was another appeal from the XXXIX of Ghent to the Parlement de Paris. Count Gui was summoned to appear before it. He went and was put in confinement, and released only on giving up the project of marrying his daughter to Edward I of England. On his return, however, he found it necessary once more to take up the English alliance. Philip IV pressed hard upon his independence: Edward I was Philip's strongest enemy. In 1297 Count Gui took part in the English war with France. Flanders was invaded, but the arrival of King Edward I with an English expeditionary force stopped the French advance. In October 1297 a truce was arranged, and the war came to an end. Scottish affairs now took up all Edward's attention. The French remained in possession of what they had occupied. In 1299 France and England made a definitive peace, at the instance of Pope Boniface VIII, but Flanders was left out of the account. Philip's garrisons and officers now controlled the Flemish cities.

Flanders invaded by France. England intervenes.

In May 1302 there took place a sudden and terrible popular rising in Bruges, against the French governor and soldiery. The 'Matins of Bruges' naturally call to memory the Sicilian Vespers of 1282. The artisans, arms in hand, rushing through the narrow streets, shouting *Schild en Vriend*, were imitated by French soldiers who mixed with the crowd and thought to pass as citizens. But their accent betrayed them, and very few escaped.

The 'Matins of Bruges'.

Everywhere, except in Ghent, where the Patricians controlled the city and held to the French alliance, the

rising became general. The movement, which was essentially popular, found leaders in the sons of Count Gui. Free peasants from the country and coast districts, the artisans, the weavers from the city, armed with long pikes, and protected only by an iron cap, made up an army that was truly democratic. A national levy met the feudal army of France, the brilliantly equipped knights of Northern France, the peasantry forced to service, the hired crossbowmen from Genoa, the mercenary men-at-arms from Germany. On July 11, 1302, the great battle took place, outside the Flemish city of Courtrai. The Flemings, led by the Counts Gui and William, with little more than thirty mounted knights in all, triumphed over the chivalry of France, which, as in the earlier stages of the Hundred Years War to come, disdained tactics, and charged first into the battle. No prisoners were taken, a remarkable event in mediaeval war, where capture for ransom was the regular practice. The French leader, Robert of Artois, remained dead on the field.

The democratic army of Flanders.

Meets the feudal army of France at Courtrai.

The Flemings victorious.

The battle of Courtrai proved the bankruptcy of Feudalism as a fighting force. The French themselves did not recognize this fact, and their feudal levies went down before the popular armies of the English in the Hundred Years War. In France the battle was considered as a mysterious tragedy, a fatal day which could not be explained. In Flanders the effects of the battle were permanent. French influence was destroyed; the old feudal county, with its rival cities, became national, united. A sense of Flemish patriotism spread through the people, now one in history and feeling, though diverse in origin. The great cities had asserted their right to the free management of their affairs, and had vindicated the energy of their meanest citizens.

Flanders becomes united and independent.

Development of the Estates General.

Between the years 1265 to 1295 the development of Parliamentary Estates took place in England. A similar development took place in France under Philip le Bel just a few years later.

An Estate consists of the representatives of some class or classes of the people, recognized as a body corporate with which the Crown can deal. The nobles in France were such an Estate when they met the king in a great council or assembly, the clergy were an Estate likewise. It was necessary for the king occasionally to summon the Estates to him, if he wished to raise extraordinary sums of money, for without their own consent tenants-in-chief of the Crown could not be taxed. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries many of the French towns had obtained charters from the Crown, and had thus come into the position themselves of tenants-in-chief. They could not be taxed without their own consent. It was therefore necessary, if the king wished to make a levy of money over the whole kingdom, to summon the clergy, nobles, and burgesses, as Estates.

The first Estates General that met in France was, as a matter of fact, not for the purpose of raising money, but of expressing united national support of the king against the Pope. It was during his struggle with Boniface VIII that Philip le Bel summoned the first Estates General of France at Notre-Dame on April 10, 1302. The great nobles and prelates came in person; enfranchised towns were represented by their magistrates. The second Estates General met at Tours in 1308, to discuss the action to be taken by the Crown against the Order of Templars. In his war against the Flemings in 1314 Philip summoned an Estates General to vote a special subsidy of money: as in England, therefore, the control of taxation, the safeguard of constitutional

government, was in the hands of the Estates. From this time such assemblies were held with fair frequency, down to the year 1614. Sometimes only Estates of the Languedoil were summoned, while those of the Languedoc were held independently; but the Estates General *par excellence* of France had representatives from both north and south. Their influence in French history was great, but they were always overshadowed by the Crown. The King maintained the practice of issuing royal edicts, like the ordinances of the King in council in England. In England, however, the royal ordinance was through time subordinated to the parliamentary statute. In France almost the contrary result took place: the edicts of the King became equal, if not superior, to the *ordonnances* of the Estates. The Hundred Years War, which ruined for the century the prosperity of France, and, like all protracted and desperate wars, increased the powers of the executive government, hastened this process. When, in 1439, the Crown was given a standing army and a perpetual tax, the victory of the royal executive government was made certain.

CHAPTER V

BONIFACE VIII

WITH Innocent III the Mediaeval Papacy reached its grandest development. Boniface VIII, with considerable force of character, but less ability, less moral power, aspired to reach a similar, or even greater height. But he lived at a time when the edifice of Mediaeval Europe was crumbling; and he came into conflict with modern forces which broke the papal power as the Mediaeval Empire had not been able to do. What the might of the Emperor Frederick II had failed to achieve was accomplished by the autocratic power of the French crown, and the skill of its civil lawyers.

Celestine V. The character of Boniface was a sharp contrast to that of his predecessor. The gentle Celestine V, the hermit of the Abruzzi, was not the man to stand up for papal prerogatives in the strifes of those days. When the messengers from the Conclave of Cardinals ascended by the rough narrow path, up Mount Murrone, to the small dark hut of the hermit, they found 'a man with unkempt beard, with pale and haggard face, clad in a shaggy tunic',[1] timidly watching their approach. They took him from his quiet and seclusion to the glare and bustle, the intrigues and the quarrels, of the papal court. Multitudes of people hailed the saint, but the poor man himself had no heart for the position. As Holy Father he found he had but little time for his

[1] Gregorovius, *Rome in the Middle Ages*, v, pt. ii, pp. 519–20.

devotions. He was Pope for little over six months. On December 13 he made his great refusal; for it is to him that readers have generally referred the verse of Dante: 1294. July 5, Dec. 13.

I saw
And knew the shade of him, who, to base fear
Yielding, abjured his high estate.

The hermit died in his cell in the castle of Fumone, in which his successor had confined him, two years later, and was canonized as a saint by Clement V in 1313.

Celestine's successor, Boniface VIII, was elected at a Conclave of Cardinals held in Naples under the influence of King Charles II, on December 24, 1294. The new Pope, known previously to his election as the Cardinal Benedetto Gaetani, belonged to a knightly family of the town of Anagni in the Sabine Hills. A handsome, dignified man, he had many qualities to fit him for his high position: he was eloquent, learned in civil and canon law, and had shown great aptitude for diplomacy. Thus he stands in sharp contrast to his meek, diffident, unworldly predecessor Celestine. Boniface was full of energy, confidence, and practical ability. Yet, equally with Celestine, he proved to be out of harmony with the age in which he lived. Celestine tried to live as a hermit devoted to prayer and asceticism. Boniface tried to live as the head of Christendom, over the kings of the earth. His designs were impracticable too. His lofty aims became obscured by the arrogance which his character displayed. His policy came into collision with the powers of the state and of centralized monarchy. With the failure of Boniface there came an end to the long struggle of the Church to establish the supremacy of the *Sacerdotium* over the *Regnum*, of the ecclesiastical over the temporal power.

Boniface VIII.

As the Head of Christendom.

The new Pope at once set himself to vindicate the power of the Papacy. Its rights over the countries of Europe were firmly asserted. Naples, then under the Angevins, Sicily under the Aragonese, Portugal, the kingdom of Aragon itself, Hungary, Bohemia, Scotland, and England, were claimed as papal fiefs. The election of an emperor required the papal assent, and a coronation at Rome. All these claims were supported by past custom or treaties; yet they were such as could not be enforced at the end of the thirteenth century. In the kingdom of Aragon, it is true, Boniface gained one great success: when King Alfonso died, his brother James consented to succeed to the throne by grant from the Pope. James did this for the sake of peace: it was better to have the Pope on his side than to encourage some other claimant, for instance, Charles of Valois, to assert a right to the kingdom, with the Holy Father's approval.

Boniface cannot enforce his claims.

June, 1295.

In Sicily, however, Boniface was less successful. Since the Sicilian Vespers the island had been divided from the Angevin kingdom of Naples, and was now held by Prince Frederick, a cadet of the House of Aragon. But Naples and Sicily had been 'given' to the House of Anjou by the Papacy, and had been held as a papal fief. Boniface felt that the existence of the Aragonese in Sicily was therefore a distinct denial and negation of papal authority. The weapon of excommunication was called into play against Frederick of Sicily. But excommunication against kings had by this time lost its terrors. Frederick remained unmoved. He had been crowned in Palermo on March 21, 1296, and no efforts of Boniface nor of King Charles of Naples could displace him.

He fails in Sicily, 1294.

With England Boniface was no more successful. In February 1296 he issued the Bull 'Clericis Laicos', which of course applied to England and to all Christendom. By

He fails in England. His Bull 'Clericis Laicos'.

this Bull the Pope enacted 'that whatever prelates or ecclesiastical persons, monastic or secular, of whatever grade, condition, or standing, shall pay, promise, or agree to pay, as levies or tallages to laymen, the tenth, twentieth, or hundredth part of their own and their churches' revenues or goods . . . shall incur, by the act itself, the sentence of excommunication'.[1] Any lay prince or power who received such tax from the clergy was also to incur excommunication. It is sometimes said that Boniface issued this Bull in order to prevent wars from being carried on with money obtained from taxation of the clergy. But no such motive is mentioned in the Bull. The only reason given in the preamble is that laymen have been in the habit of imposing heavy burdens on the clergy, and have attempted to reduce them to slavery. As the Church held a very great part of the land in every country, the Bull 'Clericis Laicos' would so much have diminished the sources of taxation, as to make government almost impossible. When Robert Winchelsea, the Archbishop of Canterbury, resolved to take his stand upon the Bull, and refused to allow the English clergy to pay taxes, Edward I simply outlawed them. This action brought about a compromise. The clergy paid their taxes, calling them voluntary gifts.

Boniface fails in France.

Philip IV of France also treated the Bull with contempt. For his war with England Philip had levied taxes on the clergy as well as the laity, up to as much as one-fiftieth of the holder's property. The Bull 'Clericis Laicos', if carried out effectively, would have made his system of government impossible. Philip's reply was conclusive: he forbade any money to go out of France to the Pope. The royal ordinance of August 17, 1296, prohibited the exportation from France of any form of wealth, without

[1] Henderson, *Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*, p. 43.

licence from the Crown. The Papacy was thus cut off from one of its chief sources of supply.

Boniface's Bull to Philip IV.

The reply of Boniface began with a direct challenge to the King of France. In a Bull issued in the month following Philip's prohibition, the Pope reminded him that 'it is a grievous loss for a king to forfeit the love of his subjects': and that neither he nor any secular prince had the power to forbid their subjects, at least their ecclesiastical subjects, to send their tribute to Rome: 'by the very prohibition is incurred a sentence of excommunication'. But having thus asserted the position of the Papacy, he then, in the same Bull, explained away the drastic terms of the Bull 'Clericis Laicos'. This Bull, he pointed out, only asserted principles which had been maintained by Popes and Councils before. 'Nor did we, by that Constitution, precisely ordain that the Prelates and Clergy were not to contribute to the necessities of the King: but we declared this was not to be done without our special permission.' Boniface added that if the realm was in danger, not merely taxes from the clergy might be levied, but crosses of gold and silver, and consecrated vessels even might be melted down for the necessities of the kingdom. He urged Philip, however, to put a stop to his war with England, which only resulted in peril to men's souls, fearful carnage, endless expenditure, and to accept the mediation which the Pope offered.

Thus Boniface abandoned his command that the clergy should pay no taxes, and for the next four years his relations with the European powers were less strained. Philip IV was pleased with his success, while Edward of England, faced with a formidable rising in Scotland under William Wallace in 1297, was ready to be friends with the Pope, and to accept his mediation. Both he and Philip in 1298 therefore submitted their quarrel to Boniface,

Boniface arbitrates between

not as Pope, but as the individual Benedetto Gaetani. Boniface accepted the position of arbiter, and gave an equitable decision for the restoration of the lands held by each monarch before the war. King Edward was to marry Philip's sister Margaret, and young Prince Edward to marry Isabella, the King's daughter. But Boniface could not refrain from pronouncing his award solemnly before the council of cardinals, thus acting not as a private person, but as Pope, the Holy Father, to whom the great temporal sovereigns were respectfully submitting their grievances.

Philip and Edward.

This attitude of the Pope did not please the monarchs, nor did his assumption shortly afterwards of the Lordship of Scotland. The Scots, fighting for their independence against England, appealed for support to Boniface, who thereupon declared Scotland to be a fief of the Church.[1] Thus the claim of the King of England to be the Lord of Scotland, vindicated at the Award of Norham, November 1292, and by the victory of Falkirk, July 1298, was contemptuously denied.

Boniface assumes overlordship of Scotland.

Boniface was now at the height of his power; the great centennial jubilee held in Rome in 1300 itself bore witness to this. The jubilee year was celebrated in memory of the Nativity of Christ. Pilgrims who should visit the Churches of SS. Peter and Paul in the course of the year were promised continuously for thirty days if they were Romans, for fifteen days if they were from other places, remission of their sins after confession. Multitudes thronged to the Holy City, as in the great days of the Crusades. In addition to the regular inhabitants, it was said there were never during the period of the jubilee year less than 200,000 present. The organization set up by the Pope was of remarkable efficiency:

The Centennial Jubilee in Rome.

[1] Bull, June 27, 1299.

'all were suitably supplied and satisfied with provisions, horses as well as persons, and all was well-ordered, and without tumult or strife: and I can bear witness to this, for I was present and saw it.' So writes the Florentine Giovanni Villani, who, as he says, 'finding myself on that blessed pilgrimage in the Holy City of Rome, beholding the great and ancient things therein, and reading the stories and great doings of the Romans, written by Vergil', and by others, was inspired himself to write a history of his time. The result is the *Croniche Fiorentine* of Giovanni Villani, 'the greatest and most naïve chronicle that has been produced in the beautiful Italian tongue'.[1]

The jubilee was a wonderful success. The offerings of the faithful brought in almost incalculable wealth. By the altars of the Churches which the pilgrims visited priests stood with rakes, to sweep the uncounted wealth together, as it was deposited by the stream of worshippers. The throng of visitors sent the price of lodging up to an enormous height, but a plentiful season and capable organization kept the price of provisions low. The story of the Pope, sitting on the throne of St. Peter, bearing the two swords of supreme temporal and spiritual power, clad in the robes both of Pope and Emperor, is no doubt a fabrication of a later age. But it is not without significance. The jubilee was indeed a great triumph for Boniface. All Europe seemed to come and bow before his throne. He felt himself indeed to be the head of Christendom, able to dictate what was right to Emperor, King, or People. Yet the jubilee was scarcely over, when Boniface was hurrying to his fall.

Boniface's enemies.

The splendour of the jubilee could not hide the un-

[1] The quotations from Villani are taken from the translation by Rose E. Selfe (London, 1906), pp. 320–1. The remark about Villani's *Chronicle* is from Gregorovius, trans. Hamilton, vi, pt. ii, p. 564.

popularity which was gathering round the Pope about this time. Inside Italy his enemies were numerous. The Fraticelli, a branch of the Franciscan Order, who revived the fame of Celestine V, had a perpetual feud with Boniface, as is seen in the bitter satires of their gifted hymn-writer Jacopone da Todi. The powerful family of the Colonnas were his enemies too. Two Colonna cardinals had voted against Boniface at his election ; he, on his part, was no sooner Pope than he found reason to accuse the family of conspiracy, and drove them into exile. But the most determined and powerful opponent of Boniface was Philip IV of France. He would tolerate no power that seemed to limit the independence of his state, and the autocracy of his crown, whether in civil or ecclesiastical affairs. Surrounded by a council of able and secularly-minded civil lawyers, such as Pierre Flotte and William of Nogaret, men trained in all the learning and logic of the University of Paris, Philip was now a match for the Pope in that warfare of words by which the temporal and spiritual powers were wont to appeal to the public opinion of their own countries, or of Europe; while in material resources Philip was immeasurably the Pope's superior.

Philip IV and Boniface.

Probably the clash of will between Boniface and Philip over the Bull 'Clericis Laicos' still rankled, although the principle of the Bull had been abandoned. About the year 1301 the tension between the two powers became acute again. King Philip's hand lay heavy on the French clergy. The King received the revenues from the lands of all vacant sees—an ancient claim, but one which both clergy and Pope objected to. There were other disputes, mainly about temporal matters, with the great clergy of France, and the Pope stepped in to protect them. The determined and tactless character of Boniface is seen in the

Boniface sends legate to remonstrate with Philip.

choice of a legate to convey his remonstrances to the French court. Bernard Saisset, the legate, had been Abbot of Pamiers in Foix, and had opposed Philip in a case concerning the jurisdiction over Pamiers. Boniface had warmly supported Bernard, and had erected Pamiers into a bishopric. It was this man whom Boniface now sent to Philip, as if to give the King a living reminder of the power of the Pope, and to keep before him the bitter memory of a signal defeat. Such a messenger was hardly likely to bring peace; Philip had him seized and imprisoned on a charge of treason, for having spoken contemptuous words against His Majesty.

Then followed a contest of words and principles, Bull and Royal Proclamation vying with each other in vigorous argument. But the lawyers of Paris were now more than a match for those of the Vatican; the sustained and hostile logic of their manifestoes had an advantage over those of Boniface, which were, in accordance with his strong and excitable character, sometimes open and conciliatory, sometimes fierce and uncompromising. At the end of the year 1301 the Pope summoned all the higher clergy of France to come to Rome to take counsel concerning the misdeeds of Philip. The summons, of course, struck at the very sovereignty of Philip, and called his subjects away from him. Only forty-five, and those mainly from the great fiefs not in the hands of the royal family, responded to the call in 1302. Meanwhile the 'Greater Bull'—Ausculta Fili—was publicly burned by the hangman at Paris. Although a more statesmanlike document than the Lesser Bull (which may have been a forgery of Boniface's enemies), it explicitly claimed supreme power for the Pope, relying on such words from the Old Testament as, 'See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to

Boniface summons French clergy to Rome.

pull down, and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant'. But Philip's answer formed a much more direct challenge: he summoned an Estates General of France to give *him* counsel about the Pope; and with it appealed to a General Council of the whole Church, to pass judgement on the Pope himself!

Philip summons an Estates General of France.

The first Estates General of France, consisting of nobles, clergy, and burghers, met at Paris on April 10, 1302, in Notre-Dame. Each Estate supported the policy of the King towards the Pope. Boniface's answer was the famous Bull 'Unam Sanctam': 'there are two swords, the spiritual and the temporal. ... Both are in the power of the Church: ... the former that of priests, the latter that of kings and soldiers, to be wielded at the command and by the sufferance of the priest.'[1] It was after the issue of this Bull that the defeat of Courtrai happened like a judgement of God upon Philip. Boniface became reconciled to Albert of Austria, whose murder of Adolphus of Nassau he now condoned. Albert issued a 'Golden Bull', acknowledging that the Emperor derived his authority from the Pope. Thus the final word seemed to have been said in the old struggle of Empire and Papacy. But though he triumphed over the Emperor, Boniface went down before the King of France.

Boniface's Bull 'Unam Sanctam'

July 11, 1302.

July 17, 1303.

A treaty of twelve articles offered by Boniface, to define the power of Crown and Pope, proved abortive. The King appealed to the national feeling of his people against the Pope's claim to universal authority. He summoned the second Estates General on June 13, 1303, when Boniface was accused of heresy, wizardry, and foul crime; and where Philip solemnly appealed to a General Council of the whole Church against the man whom he refused now to recognize as Pope. The crisis had come:

Philip's second Estates General.

[1] Milman, ii. 125.

peace was no longer possible: one or other power must go down. Boniface proceeded to use his last weapon, which would either destroy the French King or, by its failure, show the bankruptcy of the papal power: he excommunicated Philip. On September 8 all Philip's subjects were to be released from their allegiance, and the King of France put outside the pale of Christianity, if before that date he should not submit.

Philip excommunicated.

Boniface and Philip now stood before the bar of Christian Europe. By the declaration of excommunication, by the appeal to a General Council, the two great antagonists had demanded the support of all Christian people. If the dispute had been left to be settled in this way, it is by no means certain that Christian Europe would have decided against Boniface. In any appeal to the moral sense of Western Europe the Pope, by virtue of his spiritual office and its ancient associations, had every advantage. But Philip, though he had appealed to the moral sense of Europe, did not wait for its verdict. By September 7 William of Nogaret and Sciarra Colonna had been for some months in Tuscany, raising up a party[1] against the Pope. Boniface had retired to his native town of Anagni, to escape the summer heat of Rome. On September 8 cries and the clatter of horses' hoofs were heard in the streets. William of Nogaret and Sciarra Colonna with 300 men had entered the town, 'with the ensigns and standards of the King of France, crying, "Death to Pope Boniface! Long life to the King of France!"'[2] They rode through Anagni, without any opposition from the townspeople, and so came to the papal palace. Boniface, forsaken by all his

Nogaret and Colonna raise a party against the Pope.

[1] They were well supplied with money. Philip IV had given them drafts upon the Panizzi, Florentine bankers. (Villani.)

[2] Villani, trans. Selfe, p. 348.

cardinals, 'gave himself up for lost, but like the high-spirited and valorous man he was, he said, "Since, like Jesus Christ, I am willing to be taken, and needs must die by treachery, at the least I desire to die as Pope"; and straightway he caused himself to be robed in the mantle of St. Peter, and with the crown of Constantine on his head, and with the keys and cross in his hand, he seated himself upon the papal chair.' Captured, insulted, and threatened with death if he did not abdicate, Boniface remained constant throughout and refused. On the third day, the people of Anagni, now roused to a sense of shame by the treatment of the Pope, rose and drove out the invaders. Boniface was free, but the excitement and the hardships had told upon the constitution of the old man, now entering on his eightieth year. Escorted by the Orsini family he returned to Rome, and entered it amid the triumphant acclamations of the people. But his time was nearly over. Villani says he became afflicted in mind, 'so that he gnawed at himself as if he were mad'. On October 11 his troubled spirit passed away. The last strong man of the Mediaeval Papacy was dead, and the triumph of royal autocracy was achieved. It was a hundred years before the Church recovered from the blow. With all his faults Boniface was a striking figure, and had some of the elements of greatness. With him ended the line of mighty mediaeval popes, the Gregorys, the Innocents; men of lighter calibre replace them, and the history of the Papacy no longer overshadows the history of Europe.

Boniface captured.

Set free.

Boniface enters Rome.

His death, 1303.

> Veggio in Alagna entrar lo fiordaliso
> E nel vicario suo Cristo esser catto.
>
> I see in Anagni enter the fleur-de-lys
> And in his vicar, Christ made captive.
>
> (*Purg.* xx. 86–7.)

CHAPTER VI

THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY

1. The Transfer of the Papacy from Rome to Avignon

Benedict XI.

Boniface VIII was buried in St. Peter's Church, in a chapel which he had built in his own lifetime. In his place the cardinals elected Nicholas Boccasini, Bishop of Ostia, who took the name of Benedict XI. He was a man of humble birth, of an unsullied and gentle character, who had always remained faithful to Boniface. During his short pontificate—it lasted less than a year—he acted as a calm and wise man, and maintained the dignity of the Papacy against Philip IV. He showed his desire for peace by restoring the two Colonna cardinals whom Boniface had degraded; but firmly denounced, in a Bull of June 7, 1304, the assailants of the late Pope, although they were openly supported by Philip. They were excommunicated, and cited to appear before the Pope on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul. But in less than two months Benedict was dead. He had left Rome as the popes were accustomed to do in the height of summer, and had gone to Perugia. He died on July 6 or 7, after eating a dish of fresh figs. He was said to have been poisoned by the agency of the same people who had brought Boniface to his end, but death by natural means, namely dysentery, seems more probable. Thus Benedict died away from Rome. The next pope was elected from outside Italy. Another seventy years were to pass before the Papacy returned to the Holy City.

Death of Benedict.

For nine months after the death of Benedict the cardinals debated at Perugia, and were unable to agree on a pope. The mutual suspicions of Guelf and Ghibeline prevented them from agreeing on an Italian pope. At last it was agreed that the party which still remained faithful to the memory of Boniface should name three persons, but that these should be taken from prelates outside Italy; and that out of these three the cardinals should elect a pope. In this way Bertrand de Goth, who had been made Archbishop of Bordeaux by Boniface VIII, and who, as a subject of the King of England, was still less likely to be subservient to Philip IV, was raised to the Papacy. Yet it is said that before his election, King Philip, who knew the cardinals' intentions, met him in a forest near St. Jean d'Angély and made certain conditions with him, particularly that he would 'annul and destroy the memory of Boniface', and another condition which King Philip would subsequently disclose to him in due time and place.[1] It may be that this secret condition was to be the dissolution of the Order of the Templars, or it may have been that he should remain in France. The Archbishop of Bordeaux agreed, as Philip had sufficient influence with the cardinals to make or mar his election. The election took place at Perugia, but the Archbishop remained in France. He assumed the name Clement V in the Cathedral of Bordeaux on June 15, 1305. 'It will be long', said Cardinal Orsini in Italy, 'before we behold the face of another pope.'[2] Additional cardinals were created, including influential Frenchmen. 'A French pope was to be surrounded by a French court.'[3]

Archbishop of Bordeaux chosen as Pope Clement V.

Thus the Papacy entered upon its seventy years of 'Babylonish Captivity', a name given to the period by

The Babylonish Captivity.

[1] Villani, op. cit., p. 373 (Book viii, § 80).
[2] Milman, vii. 173. [3] Ibid.

Italian writers who lamented the great loss to their native country. By the absence of the Pope the Italians undoubtedly lost much; on the material side they lost a great part of the stream of pilgrims who, through the previous centuries, had spent their money in the cities of Italy, and especially in Rome, whither they were journeying. Morally, they lost the influence exercised among them, and the honour conferred, by the presence of the head of the Christian Church.

On the other hand, more recent researches have shown that during their residence beyond the Alps the popes were by no means so subservient to the kings of France as former historians have supposed. Clement V consented to dissolve the Order of the Templars, but he avoided the humiliating condemnation of Boniface VIII. On the death of the Emperor Albert in 1308, Philip designed to have Charles of Valois, his own brother, elected. Clement could not openly oppose this, yet he worked to secure the election of Henry of Luxemburg instead. As the Capetian family were already reigning in France and Naples, and had given a queen to England, the election of one of their members to the Empire would have made this family by far the greatest in Europe. Dean Milman, in his *History of Latin Christianity*, goes so far as to say that Clement's 'greatest service to Christendom was the preservation of Europe from the absolute domination of France'. The later popes, during the great struggle between England and France known as the Hundred Years War, preserved, on the whole, an attitude of impartiality between the two combatants, and exercised a certain influence in the direction of peace. The Babylonish Captivity lowered the prestige of the Papacy, by keeping it away from the traditions and associations of the Holy City of Rome and by putting it into financial

difficulties; but it cannot be said that during the period of residence at Avignon the popes were the tool of any one political party or another.

2. The Dissolution of the Order of the Templars

General Council of the Church.

During his struggle with Boniface VIII, King Philip had appealed to a General Council of the whole Church against the Pope; and, after Boniface's death, he still continued to demand that a General Council should be held, with a view to arraigning the memory of his rival and condemning it before the whole world. Pope Clement did not feel himself strong enough to refuse the demand for a General Council, which it was decided should meet at Vienne, in Dauphiné. In the meantime there were other matters which engaged the attention of Philip and called for forbearance on the part of Clement.

The Order of the Templars.

The days of great attacks upon the wealthy corporations within the Church had now begun. Philip had decided that the Order of the Templars should be dissolved and disendowed. The famous Order of the Temple, like the Knights of St. John, had arisen early in the twelfth century, to support the cause of the Cross against Mohammedanism in Palestine. In the Templars and Hospitallers were united the military and religious spirit of the Middle Ages. Like monks they were pledged to lives of pure religious devotion, yet like soldiers of the feudal age they followed the profession of arms. In them were combined the Latin and the Teutonic spirit, the spirit of devotion and the spirit of the fighting man.

Templars defended the Holy Land.

The Military Orders were the soundest element in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. Vowed to poverty, chastity, and celibacy, the Knights were a perpetual garrison, devoted to defending the Holy Land, their losses being

made good by a continuous stream of new knights, sent from the Templars' houses and great recruiting stations in Europe. It was said that from their great castles in Palestine the Templars could put 10,000 men in the field, a standing army which was maintained from the wealth conferred upon the order by pious people in Europe.

Driven out by Turks.

By the end of the thirteenth century, in spite of great organized Crusades, in spite of the more sustained efforts of the Frankish nobles of the Latin kingdom and of the Military Orders, the Cross had been driven by the Crescent from the Holy Land. The Knights of St. John retired to Rhodes, where for centuries they found a useful sphere, continuing their proper task of combating the Turks. The Templars did not follow this wise example, but continued to exist in their great houses in Europe. The Knights were numerous, the Order was opulent, and it doubtless intended to employ its forces in the next great Crusade, which was in every pious man's mind. But the age of Crusades was past. Philip IV's attacks upon the Papacy had displayed and evoked a secular spirit in Europe. The wealthy Order of the Templars, rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and now apparently idle, was not likely to escape attack. William of Nogaret and the rest of Philip's lawyers were able to prepare a list of serious charges against them, and on October 13, 1307, all the Templars in France were by one fell swoop suddenly taken prisoners.

Templars return to Europe.

Captured by Philip IV of France.

The charges against the Templars.

The charges brought by Philip's government against the Templars were sufficiently serious: indeed they were most heinous, and some of them unspeakable in their foulness. Every society, whose procedure is to a certain extent secret, is liable to come under some such suspicion. Thus the Jews in the Middle Ages, whose meetings were secret and whose ritual was unknown,

were accused of child murder and human sacrifice. Fanciful stories have often been told of the rites of initiation of Freemasons, because this society too affects to shroud its proceedings in mystery. So it was with the Templars. As their actions among their own body were not commonly known they were suspected of being something monstrous. It was from this point of view that Philip's agents brought their charges.

Although a religious Order, the Templars were accused of denying Christ and spitting on the Cross, of worshipping an image—a cat with two heads—of disgraceful rites at the initiation of new members, and of unnatural crimes. A great deal of evidence was collected through the confession of individual Templars, who were subjected to torture in the castles and prisons of the King of France. The ingenuity of the Middle Ages had contrived means for causing continuous and unspeakable anguish, with pincers, racks, wedges, screws, and other devices which the imagination can now depict, but can never realize. It is no wonder that many Templars, though not all, whose lacerated bodies could no longer bear the anguish of further tearing and pressing, owned that the charges were true. History, however, requires better evidence, but it is not forthcoming. Exhausted and trembling with pain, left in the maddening solitude of a black dungeon, hoping only for death before the return of the horrible masked messengers of pain, the Templar must not be held a sufficient witness of his own and his Order's guilt. In a large body of men like the Templars, living the abnormal life of soldiers, away from all domestic influences, in Syria, individual cases of immorality are by no means improbable. In the intervals of fighting friendly relations often arose with neighbouring Saracens, who were frequently educated and well-bred men. From

these some Templars may have learned to take an interest in Oriental religion and Oriental mysticism. This is probably the worst that can be said of them.

The arrogance and wealth of the Templars.

As an Order their real crime, if it was a crime, was their pride, the arrogance which this powerful corporation, the professional defenders of the Cross, displayed to all who came, mere amateur crusaders, to Palestine from Europe. But in the eyes of Philip IV their real crime was no doubt their wealth which he coveted. If this was so he was deceived. Such wealth as he got was insufficient for his endless needs, while the bulk of the Templars' property escaped his hands.

Clement intervenes.

When the Royal Government had extracted damning confessions by torture from the Templars, Pope Clement took the matter into his own hands, for although the temporal power could imprison and examine suspects, it was with the Church that decisions concerning heresy lay. By so doing Clement vindicated, at least in theory, the prerogatives of the Papacy, but he ruined his own reputation. For he cannot be relieved of the suspicion of having sacrificed the Templars, in order, by this concession, to divert Philip from his other design which would have been very humiliating to the Papacy, the condemnation of Boniface VIII by a General Council of the whole Church.[1]

Clement moves to Avignon.

Till now Pope Clement had resided chiefly at Poitiers or Bordeaux. He now removed, in April 1309, to Avignon, an ancient town on the Rhone, within the domains of the Count of Provence, who was now also King of Naples. Avignon was to continue to be the residence of the popes for the next sixty-five years.

113 Templars burned in Paris.

A Papal Commission was set up at Paris. Templars were re-examined and judged, this time apparently with-

[1] Villani, op. cit., p. 378 (viii, § 92).

out torture. Under this more humane treatment most withdrew their confessions, a course which only exposed them to the charge of apostasy from the orthodox state of mind in which they had confessed. In 1310 one hundred and thirteen were accordingly burned in Paris. Numerous executions took place in the Provinces. On October 3, 1312, Pope Clement in the Council of Vienne solemnly pronounced the dissolution of the Order. Prosecutions had also taken place against the Templars in England, Spain, Germany, without very serious results: in England the Templars were condemned to perpetual imprisonment in monasteries, in Germany they seem to have been judged guiltless altogether. In France they had been tortured and burned; but this was no reason, in law or equity, why their estates should go to Philip. Clement ordained that the property of the Order should be handed over to the Hospitallers, to be used, as it had always been intended, for war against the infidel. But in order to get possession they had to redeem the property, by making compensation to Philip, with the result, says Villani, that they were actually left poorer by the grant of the Templars' wealth.[1] Thus the Templars, like the Order of Jesuits in 1773, were dissolved by a pope at the request of a king. Less fortunate than the Jesuits, they were never restored.

Order of Templars dissolved.

The condemnation of Boniface was averted by Clement. In 1311 the character of Boniface was arraigned by Philip's advocates before a Papal Consistory at Avignon: he was charged with free-thinking, with denying the divinity of Christ and the immortality of the soul; he was charged also with personal viciousness. The evidence was of a hear-say character, and cannot be accurately valued. The satirical and light statements about religion and morals which were attributed to Boniface seem to foreshadow the

Charges against Boniface.

[1] Villani, loc. cit., p. 381 (viii, § 95).

agnosticism and scepticism of the Renaissance. Clement had to submit to the indignity of hearing the foul charges against Boniface, of seeing the papal reputation dragged through the dirt. But he was able to avert a degrading decision. The General Council of Vienne was showing signs of restiveness against the domineering spirit of King Philip: it seemed likely to oppose the dissolution of the Order of the Templars. To secure this Philip ceased to press the charges against his dead rival. The Council acquitted the character of Boniface, and thus vindicated the independence of the Papacy.

Boniface acquitted.

Death of Clement.

It was not long before Clement himself had to go and meet the Great Judge. When on March 11, 1313, du Molay, the Grand Master of the Templars, was being burned, he is said from the midst of the flames to have summoned Clement to meet him before the throne of the Most High. The Pope died when on his way from Avignon to Bordeaux at Roquemaure, on April 20, 1314. Philip IV died on November 29 of the same year.

3. From the Death of Clement V to the Return under Gregory XI to Rome

Pope John XXII.

Clement V died on April 20, 1314. For just over two and a quarter years the papal chair remained vacant. The conclave of cardinals, assembled at Carpentras, could not come to an agreement; the Italians naturally desired a pope who would return to Rome, but only six out of the twenty-three cardinals were Italian. When at last an agreement was reached the Frenchmen won the day, and James, Cardinal of Oporto, a native of Cahors, became Pope as John XXII. The Church for over two years had been without a head, but the head now given it had little capacity to fill the place.

Sept. 5, 1316.

John XXII, at the time of his election, was seventy-two

years old, but though he had exceeded the normal span of man's life he had still eighteen years of his luxurious course to run. He was born at Cahors, in 1244, the son of a cobbler. In the Middle Ages, in the Church, and in the Church alone, a man could rise by his talents, and without the advantages of birth or wealth, to the highest position. John's uncle, who was a merchant in a small way, had traded in Naples, and there the young man had settled and become known as a scholar of considerable learning in Canon and in Civil Law. He was appointed tutor in the family of the King of Naples, who later recommended him to Pope Clement V for the Bishopric of Avignon. As a skilful lawyer he proved most useful to the Pope, at the Council of Vienne, when the memory of Boniface VIII was being fought over, and so earned his promotion to be a cardinal.

John's birth and education.

He becomes Cardinal.

When John was elected Pope in 1316 there was no particular reason why Avignon should still remain the seat of the Papacy. The crown of the terrible Philip the Fair of France had descended to one weak prince after another; first to Louis le Hutin (the quarrelsome) from 1314 to 1316, then to Philippe le Long, who succeeded to the throne on June 5 of this year. If any external influence compelled the Papacy now to remain at Avignon it was that of King Robert of Naples; Avignon was in Provence, an hereditary county of King Robert as head of the Angevin house. John XXII himself clearly preferred the sunny city of the Rhone to Rome, with its unhealthy summer, its turbulent nobles, its insurrectionary populace.

John prefers Avignon to Rome.

For the rest of the period of the Babylonish Captivity the papal court was noted for its brightness, gaiety, and worldliness, like the court of the Renaissance popes of the late fifteenth century. But politically it was an independent court, and cannot be said to have served the interests of

any particular party during the Hundred Years War. During that unhappy strife the Crown of France had neither the prestige nor the resources to enable it to bend the Pope to its own purposes and to use him as a tool.

Anti-papal feeling in England and Germany.

The distinguishing feature of this period in the history of the Papacy is not any subservience on its part to France, but the growth of an anti-papal feeling, at any rate in England and Germany. This was largely due to the financial measures of the Avignon popes, who, losing much of the revenues which they had formerly derived from Roman pilgrimages and from the Italian State of the Church, compensated themselves and their cardinals by increased levies upon the other countries. Numerous promotions were made of bishops, so that annates or first fruits might frequently be paid into the papal treasury. Ecclesiastical lawsuits were called to Avignon, and settled there with heavy costs. Cardinals were appointed to foreign benefices, but remained at Avignon, drawing the greater part of the revenues, and administering the benefices through curates. It was against such abuses that the English statutes of Provisors and Praemunire were passed.

John's greed and cruelty.

Yet the popes of the so-called captivity period were not all bad. John XXII was a learned man, and pious in the performance of his religious duties, but he was greedy, pleasure-loving, and cruel. When he died he left eighteen million of gold florins. Shortly after his accession he had brought about the execution of the Bishop of Cahors, accused of conspiring against him; the bishop was torn asunder by four horses. But John's successor, Benedict XII, although a little weak, was a prudent and honest man, who strove hard to avert the great war between England and France by arbitration, and who attempted with some success to cut down the

Benedict XII, 1334–42.

financial exactions of the papal court upon foreign countries. The next pope, Clement VI, was generous and did something to help the meagre stipends of the poorer clergy; but he was intensely worldly; under him the court at Avignon became the gayest in Europe; arts and letters were patronized, gorgeous feasts and entertainments were provided, where ladies were present, and lent their charms to complete what was wanting in this magnificent but celibate court. Innocent VI, however, was a reformer. The evil of non-resident clergy was greatly checked; the unbridled luxury of the Avignon court was cut down, an attitude of strict justice observed towards the monarchs of Europe. He died and has left the reputation of being the most powerful and prudent of the Avignon popes. The most pious was his successor Urban V. Urban was a deeply religious man, strict in all his habits, honourable in all his actions, public as well as private. Under him Avignon was purged of its greatest abuses, till, breaking loose from all worldly connexions, he restored the Papacy to Rome. But he died after a short rule in the Holy City, and again, under Gregory XI, the Papacy returned to Avignon. But Gregory was an upright man, open to the appeals which now came in on all sides. Before he died he too restored the Papacy to Rome, so the 'Captivity' ended; but the Great Schism began. All the Avignon popes were Frenchmen, and their court predominantly of French cardinals. It would therefore be correct to call this the French period of the Papacy, because the popes were not, as they have been since, Italian in sentiment and outlook; but the name 'Captivity' is rather unjust.

Clement VI.

Innocent VI.

Urban V.

Gregory XI restores Papacy to Rome.

Among the activities of men which fill the page of history none is so prominent as warfare. Yet the normal condition of men's lives, even in the Middle Ages, was

Religious movements.

peace, not war. A war might, indeed, go on, miserably and disastrously, for years, but not continuously and intensely all the time. Fighting was common, but not what is now called 'a state of war', when the restraint and inconvenience and tension involved by a contest are put upon whole populations for long continuous periods. To an intelligent spectator in the fourteenth century there were features of the age more prominent than war, and none more prominent perhaps than those movements, half-religious, half-pathological, which make up a great part of the story of Mediaeval Christianity. Those movements shook the foundations of the Papacy, though they did not make it fall. For the papal power, with all that it implies—law, orderliness, a comely, regulated system of worship—was menaced by these wild and somewhat lawless movements, and was especially menaced by any men who felt themselves inspired to be prophets, and claimed to be a law to themselves and their followers.

Joachim of Floris.

Among the authors of such movements no man had more effect than the Abbot Joachim of Flora or Floris, but he was dead and gone long before this period opens. Joachim was Abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Flora in the kingdom of Naples, and died in the year 1202. In his own day he was known only as a holy man, as a commentator on the Scriptures, and as a mystical seer into the evils of the time. He prophesied freely and foretold the fall of the Pope's enemies. About 1254 there was published a work called the *Introduction to the Everlasting Gospel.* The author is unknown, but is believed to have been either John of Parma, the General of the Franciscan Order, or a 'spiritual' Franciscan, Gherardo da Borgo San Domingo. The Introduction explained the Everlasting Gospel as the true doctrine of the Abbot Joachim. This was to replace Christianity,

The Everlasting Gospel.

which was considered only a stage in the religious experience of mankind. The first stage had been Judaism, the religion of the Jews, which had been the revelation of the Father. Christianity was the revelation of the Son. In time it was to be replaced by the revelation of the Holy Ghost. Such a doctrine as this clearly struck at the power of the Papacy and Priesthood. The official Church would cease to be the interpreter of religion, and the spiritual guide of the world; and the new doctrine, unregulated by tradition and rule, might sweep away the whole Catholic system. To the Papacy, therefore, the Everlasting Gospel was a condemned, heretical, false doctrine; but among the mystical, devout, but unpractical and unlearned Catholics, it had the greatest influence down to the middle of the fourteenth century.

The Fraticelli adopt this Gospel.

Among those influenced by the Everlasting Gospel none were so prominent as the Fraticelli, the humblest but most mystical section of the Franciscan Order. For they believed in the literal application of the rule which St. Francis had preached—the rule of absolute 'apostolic' poverty. Against such a rule the Pope, the hierarchy, the wealthy orders were a standing testimony and obstacle. The Fraticelli had therefore to look for some other authority than the papal mandates, and they found this in the authority of the Holy Ghost, such as had been set forth in the Everlasting Gospel, and as each man might feel in his own heart. In the eyes of the Fraticelli the only good pope of recent times was the lowly anchorite Celestine V. All other popes were wealthy princes, administering a society of most un-apostolic wealth, and carrying on a rule and system of doctrine which gave no scope for new revelation by the Holy Ghost. The Fraticelli thus came into conflict with the

Papacy, and in the struggle, for instance, between the Pope and the Emperor Lewis the Bavarian, are found on the Emperor's side.

The Fraticelli abhorred the wealth and worldliness of the Mediaeval Church, and some of their members did not scruple to foretell its fall. At the end of the thirteenth century, John Peter Oliver, a Franciscan of Provence, foretold the passing away of the papal system, and announced that it would be superseded by the reign of the Holy Ghost upon earth. Already a new order had been founded in 1260 by Gerard Sagarelli, a workman from the environs of Parma. Clad in the coarsest raiment, with wild unkempt hair, he sat in the market-place of Parma, flinging his money away to the crowd about him. To be born again he was put into swaddling clothes and laid in a cradle, and then proclaimed himself an apostle sent from God. His new order of absolute poverty was the Order of the Apostles. Wild and strange as his notions were, he obtained some following in Northern Italy, till in 1300 he was burned as a heretic in Parma by the Dominican Inquisition. But his successor, Dolcino of Novara, who became an 'apostle' in 1291, was an even wilder and more dangerous character. It was not merely that he denied the power of the Pope and hierarchy, and preached the necessity of absolute poverty; but in the lovely Val de Sesia in Piedmont, to which he went in 1304, he gathered people together, in time actually some thousands. There men and women lived in devotion to the Holy Ghost, proclaiming that no human ties could stand in the way of perfection. Harmless as they were in intention, there was something unwholesome about the movement, which separated brother from sister, wife from husband, and drew them to the Val de Sesia, to live as best they might on

Gerard Sagarelli founds a new order.

Dolcino of Novara succeeds Sagarelli.

charity, in an atmosphere of mystical and neurotic revival. Threatened by the Inquisition, after being excommunicated by Clement V in 1305, they withdrew to a steep hill in the Val de Sesia, and defended themselves with the utmost fury. Under the skilful leadership of Dolcino they defeated the forces of the Podestà of Varallo and the Bishop of Vercelli, and withdrew only to take up a still stronger position. Now they lived by plunder, and under pressure of want became cruel and fierce like wild beasts. At last, in 1307, Mount Zerbal was stormed, and the apostles slaughtered or dispersed. Dolcino's heavenly sister—each apostle had a chosen sister—was burned before his eyes by a slow fire. Dolcino himself bore without a murmur the even crueller fate that was reserved for him, when his flesh was torn slowly bit by bit with red-hot pincers. Persecution was the regular weapon of authority in those days against heresy. The Fraticelli were treated like the apostles, and under John XXII and the two following popes the Dominican Inquisition pursued the congenial work of suppressing them. The spirit of discontent and religious excitement seemed everywhere. In 1320, under the name of Pastoureaux, shepherds, the peasantry of France rose in thousands, rebelling against the misery of their lot, and proclaiming that they would go and rewin the Holy Land. Under whose magnetic leadership, by what powerful suggestions, this movement arose, it is impossible to say; but somehow small bands of barefooted begging peasants grew into an army, broke into Paris, opened the prison doors, and gave vent to the instinct for plunder. Then southward they pursued their way towards the Holy Land, increasing ever in number, massacring the Jews, plundering the nobles and clergy. When they reached the coast at Aigues-Mortes the Seneschal of Carcassonne cut off their retreat, till reduced

His followers slaughtered.

Dolcino barbarously killed.

The Pastoureaux.

by want and fever they could be safely attacked, overcome, and submitted to the rigour of the law.

Rienzi.

From every point of view, in religion and in politics, the name of Rome and the memories associated with it had a potent influence throughout Europe in the Middle Ages. In no place was this influence more potent than in the Holy City itself, where the inhabitants, though they had nothing to console themselves with but the splendid relics of the city's bygone greatness, still cherished the name of Romans. Rome had no longer the Pope and Emperor swaying the whole world from its precincts, yet the citizens never lost their pride, and in a tumultuary way were always prone to assert their greatness. The citizen who came most nearly in the Middle Ages to realizing some of this longed for greatness was Rienzi.

His education.

Cola di Rienzi was born in 1312, the son of an innkeeper in the Trasteverine district of Rome. The family must have possessed some means, for the youth obtained sufficient education to read the Latin classics, and also to become a student of law. He steeped himself in the heroic history of old Rome—Livy, Cicero, Caesar, Seneca, Valerius Maximus were his favourite authors—but above all Caesar, whose brilliant lucid narrative tells so naturally the heroic deeds of the Roman people. Rome was at this period nominally under a popular government, in which the assembly of the citizens elected senators to exercise the magisterial power over them. But in reality it was tyrannized over by certain noble families, who from their huge half-ruined palaces maintained only so much justice as suited their own ends. Brooding on the vanished greatness of his people, meditating among those stately monuments of the past, those massive buildings which even now in their ruins make Rome look ancient, eternal, majestic, Rienzi was filled with

bitterness at the nobles, who in his eyes were obstructing and debauching the ancient Roman spirit. The growth of his determination, to vindicate again the ancient claims of the Roman people, have been finely told in Lord Lytton's novel *Rienzi.*

Sent to Avignon.

The learning, the talents, the eloquence of the enthusiastic young man became known in time to the people, and he was sent in 1343 to Avignon, to request Clement VI to restore the Papacy to the Holy City. It was at Avignon that he came to know another great classical spirit, the poet Petrarch. The eloquence of Rienzi was so far successful that Clement VI agreed to visit Rome, so that the joyful ambassador wrote home describing the Pope as the restorer of the Republic, as another Scipio, Caesar, Metellus, Marcellus, Fabius. Clement never returned to Rome, but he rewarded Rienzi with the position of Notary to the papal court, for executing papal documents in Rome.

Becomes Tribune at Rome.

For the next three years Rienzi was preparing for his great stroke; working by every means in his power, by speeches, by getting allegorical pictures of Rome's greatness painted and displayed in public—to rouse the people to an idea of their fallen greatness. In 1347 his time came. On the morning of February 18 a writing appeared on the doors of the Church of St. George in Velabro: 'ere long Rome will return to her good estate.' For the next two months the people became more and more excited. Rienzi was everywhere, suggesting, orating.

Revolution.

On May 20 the Revolution took place. It was the Feast of Pentecost, and all the people, warned that great things were at hand, came together before the Capitol. At 10 o'clock Rienzi issued from the Church of St. Angelo, where he had spent the night, clad in full armour, but bareheaded. By his side was a great churchman, the

Bishop of Orvieto, who was the Pope's vicar in Rome. A hundred horsemen guarded him as he went. Amid the shouts and cheers of the people he made his way through the crowd, ascended the Capitol, and stood still while he caused to be read the Laws of the Good Estate.

His Laws of the Good Estate.

The stroke succeeded: the Laws of the Good Estate were accepted with acclamation, and Rienzi himself recognized as the Magistrate of the restored Republic. He took the ancient Roman title of Tribune, or champion of the people.

The Revolution of Rienzi was in many respects like those religious movements outside the hierarchy, which ran like a nervous thrill through Western Europe in the first half of the fourteenth century. It was a popular movement, it appealed to the poor and dejected, and it claimed to rest upon the suggestion of the Holy Ghost, whose rule Rienzi was helping to realize. The mind of the Tribune was not altogether wholesome. He was too excitable, too visionary. Yet there was much good in what he did, and the Laws of the Good Estate were more practical than the measures of many other would-be reformers.

They were aimed at remedying the bad state into which justice had fallen. The thirteen regions of the city were each to be policed by a force of one hundred foot and twenty-five horse, paid by the State. All lawsuits and cases were to be dealt with and heard within fourteen days from their inception. No private fortresses were to be allowed in the city: the nobles, from whom this privilege was to be taken, were charged instead with the security of the roads round Rome.

His success.

The new régime was hailed with delight by the people: even the great nobles, the families of Orsini, Colonna, Frangipani, Savelli, and the rest, acquiesced, and ceased

to garrison their palaces. Rienzi as Tribune dealt out inflexible justice. Rome for a time was able to pursue the arts of peace. The beautiful Campagna, which was nominally within the limits of the Commune of the City, was cleared of robbers, so that the peasants could go about their ploughing undisturbed. The *Saturnia regna* of which Vergil had written seemed to be returning to the Eternal City. Kings recognized the Tribune's power: Edward of England, the Kings of Hungary and Naples; the Church, through the Papal Vicar in Rome, was associated with his government.

If Rienzi had kept himself within the bounds of Republican simplicity his power would have been more permanent. But the pride he began to show in his elevation gave his enemies the opportunity of weakening his position with the people, who were in truth rather a fickle populace, capable of great enthusiasm for liberty, but not easily bearing the restraints of a continuously settled government.

Rienzi was still living amid dreams of the ancient Roman Empire. He took the title of Augustus, and held a great coronation ceremony in the majestic church of Santa Maria Maggiore. He never took the title of Emperor, though many believed that had his power lasted longer he would have done so. He had actually, in 1348, issued a proclamation summoning 'Lewis, Duke of Bavaria, and Charles, King of Bohemia', to Rome, to settle their disputed claim to the Empire. It was shortly after this that his fall came. The Papal Court was growing suspicious of him: although living at Avignon, the Pope and Cardinals did not wish to lose control over the Holy City, or to have to return to it humbly, on the invitation and under the protection of the Tribune. The nobles began to feel that none of them were secure,

The nobles rise against him.

especially when in September 1347 Rienzi arrested three of the Colonnas and others at a feast to which he had invited them. That autumn the nobles rose in arms, and marched from the Campagna to force their way into the city. Rienzi won a lucky victory over them just outside the gates of Rome. Yet he could not use his victory: his nerve was gone. He would awake at night and call out that the enemy were breaking into his palace. Clement VI denounced him as a usurper, and indeed as Anti-Christ. The people were murmuring at his taxes. He felt his position tottering. On December 15, 1347, he fled from the city, and took refuge with the Fraticelli among the recesses of the Apennines. He had only ruled for four months.

Rienzi flees from Rome.

For two and a half years Rienzi remained with the Fraticelli at Monte Maggello in the Apennines. During this time the Black Death swept over Europe. In August 1349 he is found in Prague, informing the Emperor Charles IV that the reign of the Holy Ghost is at hand, and that the imperial power should now be reasserted in Italy, through the agency of Rienzi. But Charles IV was too prudent to yield to the flattering prospect, and refused to give Rienzi a commission to reconquer Italy for him. He handed the Tribune over to Pope Clement VI; and so there came to Avignon, as Petrarch, who was a witness of his coming, says, 'Nicholas Laurentius, the once formidable tribune of Rome, who, when he might have died in the Capitol with so much glory, endured imprisonment, first by a Bohemian [Charles IV], afterwards by a Limousin [Clement VI], so as to make himself, as well as the name and Republic of Rome, a laughing-stock'.[1] Petrarch had been disappointed in the imperial Tribune; yet it is by

Rienzi imprisoned at Avignon.

[1] Quoted by Milman, vii. 506–7.

no means certain that Rienzi would have done better to die in the Capitol, when his power was broken. He had attempted by his own independent strength to restore the ancient majesty of Rome: he had failed. He was now trying to accomplish the same object, for which his own individual capacity and resources had proved insufficient, through the Pope and Emperor. But Rienzi was now under suspicion of heresy, and his rule had been considered dangerous to papal power in Italy. He was kept in confinement, at first severely, but subsequently, under Innocent VI, under rather more comfortable conditions.

One more revolution of the wheel of fortune was to close the Tribune's amazing career. Innocent VI's very capable legate in Italy, the Cardinal Albornoz, was steadily reconquering the Papal State, which in the absence of the popes had got thoroughly out of hand. Even the nobles of Rome, although now supreme in the city, acknowledged the Pope's authority. To make this authority real it was proposed to send Rienzi back. Accordingly, in autumn 1353, the Tribune left his prison in Avignon, and joined the forces of Cardinal Albornoz. After campaigning for some time with Albornoz, he was received in August 1354 into Rome again.

He returns to Rome.

But the second rule of Rienzi proved a tyranny, which showed that he had lost the proper poise of his mind. The people murmured; the nobles easily roused them. On October 8, 1354, a great riot occurred. Once more Rienzi tried to fly from Rome, but was discovered. But the man was no coward. Beneath the Tribune's palace on the Capitol, the scene of his glory and triumph, he stood with head uncovered and arms crossed. The crowd, furious as they were, held apart in awe, till Cecco del Vecchio, more ruthless than the rest, thrust a sword through his body.

His death.

Rienzi's title to fame.

Rienzi's title to fame lies in this: that he tried to restore what was good in the past, the law, order, and justice of old Rome, and that he tried to heal the sores and wounds of Italy, by making that divided country one. 'The schismatic names of Guelf and Ghibeline parties, for which innumerable thousands of souls and bodies perished under the eyes of their shepherd, had I not begun to destroy them completely, through the reduction of the city of Rome, and of the whole of Italy, to one unanimous, peaceful, sacred and indivisible union?' He had indeed begun the work for which Italian patriots went on dreaming and striving, till their dream was fulfilled in the nineteenth century.

St. Catherine of Siena.

The name of St. Catherine of Siena is inseparably connected with the final return of the Papacy to Rome. Catherine was born in March 25, 1347, being the youngest of the twenty-five children of Jacopo Benincasa, a dyer of Siena. At the age of seven she vowed to keep herself consecrated to the Church, and for the rest of her thirty-three years she never swerved from the path of complete self-sacrifice. The aim of her life and writings was that through the purity and passion of its love the soul should live in complete and real union with God. And in truth she may be said to have achieved her aim: all her thoughts and all her actions were directed to that end. So absorbed was she when she prayed, so passionately rapt in the mystical contemplation of Christ, that the stigmata, the mark of the nails which pierced our Lord's hands at the Crucifixion, are said to have appeared on Catherine's palms (as on those of St. Francis) when on Apr. 22. Easter Day, 1375, she was taking the Holy Communion. Her confessor, Fra Raimundo the Dominican (of which Order Saint Catherine was a tertiary), states that while she yet lived our Lord permitted her to touch with her

lips his wounded side, and to drink of his blood. 'O blood! O fire! O ineffable love!'[1] she exclaims in a letter, transported by contemplation of the Son. When on one occasion the Florentines, with whom she was pleading the cause of the Pope, rose in tumult, her great regret was that she had not been killed, and so gained 'the rose of martyrdom'.

But though living in transports of mystic devotion, until her nervous energy wore down the vital forces of the body, and her soul could shake it off and fly to that closer union with God which she so ardently desired, Catherine lived happily enough in the world doing much of the world's business. She was one of the means through which the Pope returned to Rome, and she was a persuasive ambassador, an eloquent peacemaker, between the Pope and recalcitrant Italian cities.

St. Catherine aids the return of the Pope to Rome.

Petrarch, the great Italian patriot, scholar, man of letters, St. Bridget, a noble Swedish lady who had taken up her residence at Rome in 1346, and St. Catherine of Siena had lent their entreaties to bring the Papacy to Rome. Urban V had listened to the appeals, and for three tranquil years had lived in the Holy City. St. Bridget foretold his death if he should leave it again, and the suffering old Pope died within three months of his arrival in Avignon.

Gregory XI, the last of the French popes, was the Cardinal Peter Roger, nephew of Pope Clement VI. He was a man of blameless life, and an earnest seeker of peace. The letters and messages of the holy maiden of Siena could not but have some influence upon him, and added to this were motives of prudent statesmanship, which urgently required a return. Italy was in rebellion against the Avignon Papacy. The ancient allies of the

Catherine writes to Gregory XI.

[1] Milman, viii. 27, note.

Holy See there were either indifferent or merely hostile; while the State of the Church was in open revolt.

The State belonging to the Church.

The State of the Church occupied a great part of Central Italy, on both sides of the Apennines, from a point sixty miles south of Rome, and it included the districts of Ravenna and Bologna on the north. The Tuscan cities and their districts were, of course, outside the Papal State. The State itself was as loose as most feudal sovereignties; it contained counties and cities, such as Rome itself, which had special privileges and immunities, and were only in a very vague sense dependent on the Pope. Nevertheless, the authority of the Pope was, as a whole, a real thing, exercised by ecclesiastical rectors, 'the pastors of the Church', as they were called, who collected the taxes of the sovereign Pope, dealt with appeals at law, and, if necessary, hired mercenaries, like the famous Sir John Hawkwood, to coerce rebellious communes. While the popes were resident at Avignon the need for raising taxes in the State of the Church was greater than ever. Yet the Italians naturally had less sympathy for the Pope as their temporal lord when he was a Frenchman, living outside Italy. Cities objected to the interference of the papal rectors and disputed the payment of taxes. During the pontificate of Urban V, his Legate, the vigorous and statesmanlike Cardinal Albornoz, won back most of the State of the Church, but in Gregory XI's time the State was in revolt again.

The Republics, the Dynasties, and the State of the Church.

During the last half of the fourteenth century there were, as the historian Gregorovius points out, three principles at work in Italy: the republican, the dynastic, and the principle of the State of the Church. Two of these might have succeeded in uniting Italy: each of the three was incompatible with the other. The establish-

ment of a dynasty was incompatible with the freedom of a republic; the State of the Church, if it became strong and organized, could tolerate neither dynasty nor republic within its border. Italy might be (as has happened) united under one family, into a single dynastic state; or the cities, as Rienzi dreamed, might have joined together, in one republican federation. But under the State of the Church no complete union of Italy could be achieved. The type of papal government was not favourable to extended rule. Clergymen and mercenaries are not likely to be efficient substitutes for the vigorous government of a dynasty or the enthusiasm of a republic. The Pope, too, would always be hampered by his dual position, as a territorial Italian prince and as Head of the Catholic Church throughout Europe.

Gregory XI involved in struggle with the Visconti of Milan.

It so happened that when St. Catherine was urging Gregory XI to return to Rome, the Pope was involved in political trouble, with a dynasty, a republic, and with his own temporal State. The dynasty was the Visconti family of Milan, who had not merely become lords of Milan itself, but were building up a strong power in the north of Italy. The Visconti were Ghibeline, and not merely came into collision with the Guelfic party, the allies of the Papacy, but began encroaching upon the State of the Church. In 1372 Gregory XI found it necessary to issue a Bull specially directed against the Visconti, forbidding any one to marry with the males or females of that house. At the same time the Papacy was involved with its ancient friend the Republic of Florence. In 1375 the Republic joined with Bernabò Visconti and formed a league, along with some other Italian cities, to get rid of the secular power of the popes, who, although absent in Avignon, were never at peace in Italy, and by their European politics were continually exposing

it to foreign invasion. The formation of this league was immediately followed by a general revolt in the State of the Church. A message had gone from the Republic of Florence to the Romans, 'do not suffer your Italy, which your ancestors, with their blood, made mistress of the world, to be subject to barbarians and foreigners'.[1] The *barbarians* were French and German, but the Pope was among the *foreigners*. It was clear that if the Papacy was not to lose all temporal power in Italy it must return to that land.

Catherine of Siena visits Gregory.

In 1376 Catherine of Siena, ever intent upon peace and upon the good of Italy as a whole (for she was a pure patriot and her large charity embraced the whole country), went to Avignon, to reconcile the Pope to the Republic of Florence, which in the same year had been cursed by the Holy Father and put under a terrible interdict. If she was less successful in making peace at this time between the Pope and Florence, her summons of Gregory to Rome was more effectual. Fra Raimundo, her confessor and biographer who was with her, tells how she and he went to visit Gregory in his palace, and found him standing at a window gazing sadly over the lovely prospect which lay beneath him and beyond: the sunny, smiling country of the Rhone. Catherine, waiting till the Pope should recover from his abstraction, paused by a table on which lay a missal, a treasure from the Papal Library, a beautiful parchment, illuminated, bound together with silver clasps. The old man turned and met the pleasant sight of the serene and pure-faced Catherine bending over the missal. 'Here', said Gregory, 'my spirit finds repose in study and in contemplating the lovely things around me.' But Catherine would let nothing stand in the way of duty. 'To do our duty,

[1] Gregorovius, vi, ii, p. 487.

most Holy Father', she replied, 'and to act according to God's will, you shall abandon those beautiful things, and take the road to Rome.'[1] In time the hesitating Gregory was convinced. Throwing off the yoke of his French cardinals he left 'the sinful city', its pleasant palaces, its gay court, on September 13, 1376. Taking ship with his suite from Marseilles, he landed at Corneto in the State of the Church on December 5. Christmas was spent there: and then he went on by sea again to Ostia. It was no pleasant journey, along the desolate coast of 'the Patrimony of St. Peter', so unlike the fertile land of Provence. On January 15 Gregory sailed up the Tiber, and on the seventeenth made his entry into Rome in state.

Gregory travels to Rome.

The return from Avignon was thus accomplished, and at once bore fruit. The Romans were glad to have their pastor back, remembering the three peaceful years they had enjoyed under Urban V. Gradually the State of the Church returned to its allegiance, and the war with Florence came to an end. Yet Gregory himself felt little reason to be satisfied. He was sick to death, longing for the sight of his beautiful Provence. Had he lived longer he might, like Urban V, have gone back to Avignon. He died on March 27, 1378, conscious that Avignon still exercised its influence in the Church, and that a schism was all too likely.[2]

His death.

[1] Quoted in *Saint Catherine of Siena*, by the author of *Mlle Mori* (London, 1906), p. 176.

[2] See Bull of March 19, 1376, in case of a disputed election on his death. Gregorovius, vi, ii, p. 491.

CHAPTER VII

THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

The First Part

The Hundred Years War was one of the most protracted and momentous movements in European History. It spread desolation over the north of France, and left England exhausted and a prey to civil war. It reverberated beyond the borders of the belligerent countries, into Spain, Italy, and Germany. It broke up feudalism, and thus, with the revival of letters, prepared the way for Modern Europe. It arrested the growth of free institutions in France and England, and exercised a similar tendency even in Italy, Germany, Spain. Out of the conflict a new Europe arose. Instead of the loosely compacted and weak mediaeval societies there were developed solid states of the modern pattern, great Powers which divided Europe among themselves, and faced each other in alternate periods of war and armed peace.

The war not continuous.

The Hundred Years War itself was by no means a period of continuous fighting. For years together, for instance from 1381 to 1415, there was no organized war at all; again, from 1435 to 1449, there was little or no fighting. Even during the years of actual warfare there was by no means continual fighting: the campaigning season was in summer, and between campaigns the armies almost ceased to exist. Men returned to their ordinary avocations and laid aside the sword. Armies when actually on foot absorbed only a fraction of the population. Twenty thousand was an extremely large number for any

one country to put in the field; and such a number was made up chiefly of peasants and gentry. The townspeople were seldom called to serve; the churchmen, the scholars and students, never. War was not waged with whole nations, but only with the few people to whom the use of arms came more or less naturally. This explains why it could last so long, and why short decisive battles in which all the trained men risked their lives appear to be more important than the long drawn-out strain of a modern war.

Devastation caused by the war.

The conduct of war was atrocious. Armies, for a great part of the Hundred Years War, lived upon the country, and plundered as they went. Villages were burned and peasants hung upon trees. A ferocious type of mercenary was developed on each side, who knew no pity. Yet an army was only a comparatively small column: and if it plundered wherever it went, it could not plunder universally. The walled towns were the asylums of peace and industry: the country-side, subject to sudden visitations of the devastating horde, had its periods of quiet too. Yet when all allowances are made, the Hundred Years War remains as the calamity of the Middle Ages.

Causes of the war.

The Hundred Years War began out of the reciprocal pressure of France and England upon each other; France, to drive the English out of the lost French possession, Guienne; England, to defend this dominion, and to buttress it up by new acquisitions. Soon, however, it developed into something bigger, England fighting for a continental Empire, France for her own independence and integrity.

The French monarchy.

The French monarchy had not been fortunate since the death of Philip IV. First Louis X, 'le Hutin' or the quarrelsome, eldest son of Philip, became king at the

Louis X.

age of twenty-five, and died after a somewhat futile reign of two years (1314–16). During this period the nobles regained much of the power which they had lost under Philip IV. When Louis died he left only a daughter Jeanne. A posthumous son was born, but died within a week of birth. Jeanne might have succeeded as queen, as women commonly succeeded to great fiefs throughout the Middle Ages. But Philip 'le Long', the next brother of Louis X, was able to secure his own accession. A sort of fatality, however, hung over the children of Philip the Fair. Philip V's reign was short and hideous. Taxes were high: the people were depressed and discontented. Some evil persons suggested that the misfortunes of the time were due to the machinations of the unhappy race of lepers. These wretched victims of the filth of the Middle Ages were accordingly massacred. Those who were not killed were perhaps less fortunate in their imprisonment in the lazar-houses. Philip V was thirty years old at his death. He left four daughters. He himself, however, had established the principle of succession known later as the Salic Law, so the last brother, Charles 'le Bel', became king (1322–8). But the curse of the tortured Templars was still in the breed of Philip IV. The reign of Charles IV was no more fortunate than those of his brothers. With him died the direct line of Hugh Capet, who had displaced the House of Charlemagne in France in the year 987. Charles had a daughter born after his death, and she too was set aside in favour of Philip of Valois, the son of Philip IV's famous brother Charles who had gone to Italy in 1301, and helped to bring about the exile of Dante from Florence

Philip V, 1316–22.

Charles le Bel.

Philip VI (of Valois).

Thus Philip of Valois was made King of France, through the recognition of the barons, notables, and burghers of France. Queen Isabella of England and the

Regent Mortimer protested in favour of their ward, young King Edward III. Isabella was the sister of the dead Charles IV. Philip of Valois was only his cousin. Even if Isabella herself could not succeed, her son stood nearer in kinship to the last king than did Philip VI. But the barons of France decided that the crown should remain in the male line. Many French princesses entered into foreign marriages, and if they were allowed to transmit to their children a right of succession to the French throne endless complications would ensue. So the claim of Edward III was disregarded, and he himself next year, June 6, 1329, met Philip VI at Amiens, and did homage to him for Guienne, recognizing Philip as his feudal overlord, that is, as King of France.

Guienne the cause of war.

It was Guienne that caused the great war, or rather it was Guienne which had been causing intermittent war ever since Philip Augustus returned from the Crusade in 1191, leaving Richard of England behind him, and began attacking the English possessions in France. The conflict between England and France for French soil was therefore more like a Three Hundred Years War than One Hundred Years. Indeed it was longer still, and had been waged, more or less openly but always persistently on the French side, ever since the Duke of Normandy became King of England in 1066. The development of the French crown and nation was bound to lead to an increasing pressure upon the foreign power, that of the English, in France. Against this the great wars of Edward III, and the more serious effort at complete conquest made by Henry V, were a natural reaction, a species of self-defence.

When the great war began, in 1339, the question at the moment was undoubtedly Guienne. Since the Treaty of Paris, 1258, the English power in Guienne had still further decreased, partly through war, partly through legal

processes, by which the French king had intervened in lawsuits between his immediate vassal the Duke of Guienne (or English king) and his immediate vassals the nobles of Guienne. By the year 1328 the English power only extended from the mouth of the Charente to a little way south of the mouth of the Adour: inland it only extended in a few places for more than fifty miles. 'Chased from the basin of the Gironde, the English king had doubled back to the sea; his fief steadily dwindling, he is left with nothing but a narrow strip of coast from the Charente to the Adour. But for the Hundred Years War, the English would have been wholly expelled from France, without a blow. . . . The prompt war-policy which Edward III inaugurated arrested the normal development of the Treaty of Paris, at the moment when that development was all but complete.'[1]

Diminution of English power in France.

Probably every great war is the result of a long period of tension between two great States—tension which would produce war sooner or later, although the particular moment of war's outbreak is due to certain definite and apparently preventable events. The energetic policy of Philip VI in the first ten years of his reign made war with England imminent by 1339. He had seriously checked the influence of the English government in Scotland and Flanders: and at sea the Norman and Breton sailors had made the Channel dangerous for English shipping.

France allied with Scotland.

As early as 1295 the French crown had begun the historic alliance with Scotland, which was to endure for 365 years. In 1295 the Scots were engaged in their War of Independence against Edward I of England. The resistance of William Wallace, and afterwards the more fortunate rule of King Robert Bruce, especially the decisive battle of Bannockburn in 1314, had made

[1] Déprez, *Les Préliminaires de la Guerre de Cent Ans.*, p. 25.

impossible the English design to annex Scotland. In 1328 the government of Queen Isabella and Mortimer had, by the Treaty of Northampton, recognized the independence of Scotland. War broke out again, however, in 1332, with notable successes for the English cause at the battle of Duplin, and at Halidon Hill next year, 1333. The young king of Scotland, David Bruce, was sent by the national Scottish party to France for safety. For six years (1332–8) Edward III intermittently ruled part of Scotland through a vassal king, Edward Balliol. But by the year 1339 the national party had rewon most of Scotland for David Bruce, under the leadership of the patriotic and able Robert the Steward (great founder of the House of Stewart), and with the help of the French king, Philip VI. Edward III saw clearly that if the English designs on Scotland were ever to succeed, the power of the French king to help the Scots must be decisively checked. The best way to check Philip VI would be to lay waste his territories, annex some of them, still better to dethrone him.

Contention for Flanders.

Flanders was another cause of friction between France and England. Since their defeat at the battle of Courtrai (1302) the French government had by no means given up their intention of controlling that unruly fief. Louis de Nevers, Count of Flanders, was cousin to Philip VI. He was involved in serious difficulties with the great commercial towns of Ypres, Ghent, Bruges, and Dunkirk, which rebelled against his taxes. The burghers of Bruges, who already had a valuable connexion with England through the wool-trade, offered in 1328 to recognize Edward III as King of France. In the same year, however, Philip VI and the Count of Flanders came against them with a great army, chiefly of French nobles and mounted men-at-arms, and laid them low at the battle of

Cassel. The cities of Flanders depended upon England for the raw wool which they made into cloth. When in 1337, just before the outbreak of hostilities with France, Edward III forbade the exportation of English wool to Flanders, his action produced a severe economic crisis there. The burghers were always ready to throw off the rule of their Count, and Edward III of England was naturally ready to be friends with them, against the Count and the King of France. In 1337 James van Artevelde, an energetic and wealthy burgher of Ghent, made overtures to Edward III, in order that Ghent might get the wool upon which its industry depended. By the end of 1339 the connexion between Edward III and Ghent had become a definite alliance, although neither side got much benefit from the alliance, except that Edward was able to borrow money which he could not pay back. James van Artevelde is depicted by Froissart as something of a tyrant in Ghent.

James van Artevelde.

'He was entered into such fortune and grace of the people that all thing was done that he devised: he might command what he would through all Flanders, for there was none, though he were never so great, that durst disobey his commandment. He had always going with him up and down in Gaunt sixty or fourscore varlets armed, and among them there were three or four that knew the secretness of his mind, so that if he met a person that he hated or had him in suspicion, incontinent he was slain: for he had commanded his secret varlets that whensoever he met any person and made such a sign to them that incontinent they should slay him, whatsoever he were, without any words or reasoning; and by that means he made many to be slain, whereby he was so doubted, that none durst speak against anything that he would have done, so that every man was glad to make him good cheer. And these varlets when they had brought him home to his house, then they should go to dinner where

they list, and after dinner return again into the street before his lodging and there abide till he came out, and to wait on him till supper time. These soldiers had each of them four groats Flemish by the day, and were truly paid weekly. Thus he had in every town soldiers and servants at his wages, ready to do his commandment and to espy if there were any person that would rebel against his mind, and to inform him thereof: and as soon as he knew any such, he would never cease till they were banished or slain without respite. All such great men, as knights, squires, or burgesses of good towns as he thought favourable to the earl[1] in any manner, he banished them out of Flanders, and would levy the moiety of their lands to his own use and the other half to their wives and children. Such as were banished, of whom there were a great number, abode at Saint Omer's.

'To speak properly, there was never in Flanders nor in none other country, prince, duke nor other that ruled a country so peaceably so long as this Jaques d'Arteveld did rule Flanders. He levied the rents, winages and rights that pertained to the earl throughout all Flanders and spended all at his pleasure without any account making. And when he would say that he lacked money, they believed him, and so it behoved them to do, for none durst say against him; when he would borrow anything of any burgess, there was none durst say him nay.'[2]

He was murdered by townspeople of Ghent in 1345, and the Count returned to his uneasy rule over Flanders.

Louis the Bavarian makes an alliance with Edward III.

The Hundred Years War became a European question from the first. The fortunes of the Papacy were involved in it, and it brought in the Emperor, Louis the Bavarian, towards the end of his stormy career. Louis was Ghibeline. He had attempted to re-establish the imperial power in Italy, and had been excommunicated by John XXII. But he had defied the Papacy, and set up an anti-pope of his own, Pietro da Corvara. Philip VI was orthodox, and

[1] The Count of Flanders.

[2] Froissart, chap. xxix (Lord Berners' Trans.—'Globe' Edition).

supported the Avignon Papacy: Edward III was orthodox, but indifferent, or rather suspicious of the Avignon Court. So Edward and Louis formed an alliance when Edward in 1338 visited Coblenz and was solemnly invested, in a public ceremony in the Castorplatz, with the position of 'Vicar-General of the Empire'.

Anti-pope established.

Benedict XII had worked hard to keep the peace. Louis the Bavarian, aided by the learned and daring thinkers William of Occam and Marsiglio of Padua, had denied the Pope's authority, and an anti-pope, a rival papacy, had been established. The union of Louis the Bavarian and Edward III could not be contemplated with equanimity by Benedict XII. But he was sincerely anxious for peace for other reasons. The Pope in the Middle Ages had a kind of international position, and

The Pope as Peace-maker.

was the guardian of European peace. He was often appealed to on international or national questions, in the way in which the government of some neutral state is sometimes appealed to to-day. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the struggle known as that of the Empire against the Papacy, the identification of the Papacy with the Guelfic interest, had seriously prejudiced the Pope's influence as an impartial neutral. The period of residence at Avignon carried with it the implication of French interest. Nevertheless the natural tendency of the clergy must always be towards peace. Benedict XII in 1337 had two cardinals engaged in trying to mediate between France and England. But their efforts were bound to fail. They might remove particular occasions of dispute, but they could not permanently relax the tension between the two great States, the one bent upon retaining its old inheritance on French soil, the other on rewinning its lost territory. Benedict XII was able to postpone the horrors of a great war for several months. But

in 1339 Edward III invaded France. And when the Cardinal of Montfavence watched from a neighbouring tower how the English and German men-at-arms burned and wasted the fair Cambrésis, and when he realized the ruin of the peace of Western Europe, he fell down in a swoon.[1] Edward invades France.

The last years of Philip VI were to be years of disaster. But till 1345 he was not unsuccessful. Till the opening of the war with England, France seems internally to have been peaceful and prosperous. The war, when it actually came, was desultory and inconclusive for the first seven years. The Flemish and imperial alliance proved practically valueless to Edward III. The English achieved some success in Brittany by taking sides in a disputed succession to the Duchy between John of Montfort and Joan of Penthièvre. This dispute between a male and female claimant reproduced some of the features of the French succession question in 1328. Edward III adopted the cause of John of Montfort, and by the battle of Morlaix in 1342 and La Roche Derrien in 1347 the English obtained ascendancy in Brittany. About the same time the three raids of the dashing Henry, Earl of Derby, from Guienne, especially the small but important victory at Auberoche and the capture of Aiguillon, did something to extend the limits of English power again in the south-west of France. But the heaviest blows to France were struck at the battles of Crécy and Poitiers. English successes in Brittany.

Philip VI was a pious man, fond of his eight children, fond of knightly deeds. Under him, as under the last four kings, France had enjoyed peace. There had been some wars, but these had been fought on the frontiers, in Flanders or even beyond the Alps, in Italy. France was prosperous and populous—it is calculated that the country contained over twenty million inhabitants as

[1] See Tout, *Political History of England*, 1216–1377, p. 339.

against England's four or five millions. Yet the end of his reign brought the beginning of a period of want and desolation. It is difficult to blame Philip for the Hundred Years War. As long as Guienne was in the hands of the English war was almost certain to come sooner or later. Only the very greatest statesmanship could have dealt with such a problem.

The English invasion.

The English invasion of the north of France in July 1346 found Philip VI poorly prepared to meet it. Yet the English force was only a small one of about 13,000 men, and the resources of France, even although a large force was already engaged in the war in Guienne, seemed perfectly adequate to deal with such a raid. Yet the English army marched plundering to within a few miles of the walls of Paris (to Poissy), and the burghers of the capital could watch with trepidation the villages of the country-side burning and even the *faubourgs* of Paris itself. Yet the French plan of campaign was a good one. It aimed first at preventing Edward from crossing the Seine, and when he crossed this it aimed at shutting him in between the Somme and the sea. Even when Edward crossed the Somme he still seemed simply to be rushing on to his doom.

Battle of Crécy.

Philip had been in touch with the movements of the English throughout their march to Crécy. He had played a safe game, having a large army and always watching to catch the enemy at a disadvantage. On

Aug. 26, 1346.

August 26 or 27 he resolved to give battle to the English, and to attack them where they were strongly posted at the village of Crécy in Ponthieu, the county of Edward III's mother, which Philip VI had lately seized. The battle was a complete defeat for the French, although they numbered about 60,000 as against the 13,000 or 14,000 of the English. It was the defeat of a large

disorderly army by a small and orderly one. King Philip had been advised to delay the attack till the 27th. But the ill-disciplined impetuosity of the French knights, with which the knightly Philip appears to have sympathized, precipitated the battle, late in the afternoon of the 26th.

'The Lords and Knights of France came not to the assembly together in good order, for some came before and some came after in such haste and evil order that one of them did trouble another. When the French king saw the Englishmen, his blood changed, and said to his marshals: "Make the Genoways go on before and begin the battle in the name of God and St. Denis." There were of the Genoways cross-bows about a fifteen thousand, but they were so weary of going afoot that day a six leagues armed with their cross-bows, that they said to their constables: "We be not well-ordered to fight this day, for we be not in the case to do any great deed of arms: we have more need of rest." These words came to the Earl of Alençon who said: "A man is well at ease to be charged with such a sort of rascals, to be faint and fail now at most need." . . . When the Genoways were assembled together and began to approach they made a great leap and cry to abash the Englishmen, but they stood still and stirred not for all that: then the Genoways again the second time made another leap and a fell cry and stepped forward a little, and the Englishmen removed not one foot: thirdly again they leapt and cried and went forth till they came within shot; then they shot fiercely with their cross-bows. Then the English archers stept forth one pace and let fly their arrows so wholly [together] and so thick that it seemed snow. When the Genoways felt the arrows piercing through heads, arms, and breasts, many of them cast down their cross-bows and did cut their strings and returned discomfited. When the French king saw them fly away, he said: "Slay these rascals, for they shall let and trouble us without reason." Then ye should have seen the men of arms dash in among them and killed a great number of them: and ever still the Englishmen shot whereas they saw

thickest press; the sharp arrows ran into the men of arms and into their horses, and many fell, horse and men, among the Genoways; and when they were down they could not relieve again, the press was so thick that one overthrew another. And also among the Englishmen there were certain rascals that went afoot with great knives, and they went in among the men of arms, and slew and murdered many as they lay on the ground, both earls, barons, knights and squires. whereof the King of England was after displeased, for he had rather they had been taken prisoners.'[1]

The German House of Luxemburg, the rival of the Emperor Louis the Bavarian, was represented by the blind King John of Bohemia and his son, Charles of Moravia, afterwards the Emperor Charles IV. King John was killed, Charles escaped in the flight. The total number of French killed was about 4,000 men, but of these about 1,200 were nobles—the chief fighting men of the land. Philip VI fought bravely and had two horses killed under him. Among those killed was Louis de Nevers, Count of Flanders. His son, Louis de Maile, succeeded to Flanders, and maintained the alliance with the French crown. The defeat at Crécy crippled the power of the French monarchy for some years, and rendered it impossible to raise the siege of Calais which the English immediately undertook. The Scottish monarch, David Bruce, true to the French alliance, made a diversion into England in October 1346, but was defeated by the English queen, Philippa of Hainault.[2]

Capture of Calais.

On August 3, 1347, the ancient little town of Calais, the haunt of fishermen and Channel pirates, surrendered to the English, in whose hands it remained for 210 years.

Philip VI's happy reign now closed in sadness. The

[1] Froissart, chap. cxxx ('Globe' Edition).
[2] Battle of Nevill's Cross.

war had drained his resources, so that he had recourse to borrowing, to debasing the coinage, and various extraordinary impositions, like the Gabelle, or monopoly of salt, which had been extended to the whole kingdom in 1341. In 1347 the Black Death reached France, and desolated the country, and gave rise among other things to that curious feature of the Middle Ages, the Flagellants—men who wandered about from town to town chanting, and flogging each other's bleeding shoulders with leathern and iron-beaded whips. In August 1350 Philip VI died. He had lost Calais and failed to rewin Guienne. In 1349, however, when the Black Death was dying down, he had got together enough money to buy Montpellier for the Royal Domain from Don Jayme, the King of Majorca, belonging to the cadet branch of the House of Aragon.

Death of Philip VI.

Philip was succeeded by his eldest son John, aged 31, like his father a knight of chivalry, reckless, generous, obstinate, trained in the art of war, but in the old style, already becoming obsolete. The war with England had, since the loss of Calais, languished through truces and the Black Death; but in 1351 it was renewed through a quarrel between King John and his cousin Charles 'the Bad', King of Navarre, and Lord of Mantes and Meulan in Normandy. Edward III, invited by Charles the Bad, renewed hostilities in earnest in 1355.

John becomes King of France.

Hostilities renewed.

The most notable events now took place in the south and west. The young Prince of Wales was sent by Edward III as Governor to the faithful English Duchy of Guienne. He arrived at Bordeaux on September 20, and on October 5 started with 14,000 men on a wonderful raid into Languedoc, where he burned the suburbs of Toulouse and penetrated to the southern sea at Narbonne, finally arriving back at Bordeaux on December 9, after

having plundered and ruined five hundred villages and other places.

The Battle of Poitiers.

In the next autumn the Black Prince set out again from Guienne with about 11,000 men to march through Poitou and Anjou, to join the English forces which were fighting in Normandy. But King John was ready with 50,000 men. The Loire was guarded so that the Black Prince could not cross. King John and his great army from Chartres were marching to drive the English into the Loire. The Black Prince retired towards Guienne again, but stopped near Poitiers, on September 18, to meet the whole French army. A waiting policy would have given the French certain victory. But the knightly King John decided on battle next day, and again Crécy was repeated, and the day of Agincourt forecast. Two thousand five hundred French nobles and men-at-arms lay dead on the field, and the King was a prisoner.

Sept. 19, 1356.

The Dauphin Regent.

While the King was prisoner in England the Regency of France was in the hands of the Dauphin Charles, aged 19, at the battle of Poitiers. Under him the monarchy had to face two crises, one from a constitutional opposition, the other from a social revolution.

The Monarchy and Estates General.

Since the time of Philip le Bel the royal power and the influence of the Estates General, which corresponded to the Parliament of England, had been growing in an equal degree. The English war, requiring as it did both the firm exercise of royal authority and the grant of extra taxes by the Estates, brought matters to a crisis. A great attempt was made to limit the monarchy, and to establish constitutional government. About the same time a similar struggle was going on in England, and owing to the same causes. But the results were different. In England the parliamentary authority issued from the struggle confirmed and strengthened. In France the

constitutional authority received a blow from which, though it continued to exist for something over two hundred and fifty years more, it never recovered.

The state of France.

Since the opening of the English war there had been a tremendous decline in the prosperity of France, and many were the abuses of which the Estates General had to complain. The taxes had been increased, and the coinage had been recklessly debased. It is calculated that between the years 1336 and 1350 the value of the *livre tournois* had declined from over seventeen francs to just under two.[1] The country-side, in every part where it had been exposed to war, was in a fearful condition. The towns could protect themselves, but the country people were exposed to the ravages of war, even during the periods of truce. The French and English soldiery alike 'lived upon the country'. Already those bands of mercenary soldiers, which were to be the curse of France for the next hundred years, had made their appearance, and when not engaged in regular warfare settled upon the country-side, and lived by plunder and exaction. Sir John Hawkwood, who went to Italy and became Commander-in-Chief of the Florentines, belonged to the highest rank among these companies of *écorcheurs*, as they were later called: the more humble were even a greater and more constant pest—Robert Knolles in Normandy, the Welshman Ruffin between the Loire and Seine, Albrecht de Buef on the Marne,[2] each with his hardened company of evil-doers. No wonder that the merchant of the town trembled for his goods as they travelled by pack along the roads, and that Jacques Bonhomme, the peasant, was desperate. And the nobles were blamed for all; reckless, self-indulgent, extravagant,

[1] Lavisse, *Histoire de France*, t. iv, ii, p. 98.
[2] Lavisse, op. cit., pp. 131–2.

they had failed in their natural profession of fighting, and had ruined France at Crécy and Poitiers; the lawful and appointed protectors of the peasantry, they had left their tenants without defence, or themselves took part in the plunder. The peasantry now looked to the Crown, to the Dauphin, to help them.

'S'il est bien conseillé, il n'obliera mie
Mener Jacque Bonhome en sa grant compagnie.
Guerres ne s'enfuira pour ne perdre la vie.'[1]

Etienne Marcel.

But the first serious attempt to help them and the rest of the kingdom came from the Estates General, led by Etienne Marcel. Etienne Marcel was one of the burghers of Paris, a draper, living near Notre-Dame in the Rue de la Vieille-Draperie, rich, married, with six children. At the time of the battle of Poitiers he was 40 years old, and held the important office of Prévôt des Marchands. This office, nominally the head of the ancient gild of 'Merchants of the Water', that is, the Seine, had come to be equivalent to something like that of the Mayor of Paris now. The Prévôt was not merely the head of the commercial system of Paris, but, except where the Crown was specially interested, was magistrate over all law cases, in the city and over the whole course of the Seine. Etienne was thus the official head of Paris, and in the Estates General the natural leader of all the burghers of the Languedoil.

The Estates General and Finance.

The cause of reform was taken up and rapidly developed, as was happening also in England. In 1355, the year before the battle of Poitiers, the Estates General met at Paris, and in the constitutional manner, which was becoming so familiar in England, voted a subsidy to the Crown, but upon certain conditions. It was to be contributed by every class, noble, clergy, commons, rich

[1] Quoted by Lavisse, op. cit., p. 110.

and poor. Deputies were appointed to superintend the collection of the subsidy, to retain it in their own hands, and to disburse it only for the needs of the army. Thus the Estates General established the great engines of constitutional government and financial purity, namely, the granting and appropriating of money. Had they held to these things for the rest of French history there would have been no Revolution. But as the great war went on their control got weaker, till in 1439 they abandoned the principle of control of taxation, by granting the *taille* in perpetuity to the Crown.

The Estates General of 1355 had made a distinct advance in the direction of constitutional government. After Poitiers the Crown, as represented by the Dauphin, was ready to consent to still further reforms. The Estates General came together on October 17, 1356, almost one month after the battle of Poitiers. The misfortunes of the kingdom they felt to be due largely to bad councillors of the King, and they demanded therefore that the King's Council should be elected after deliberation with the three Estates. Thus they made the same claim as the English House of Commons made, more successfully, in the reign of Henry IV. The request was not granted by the Dauphin, but after the next Estates General, in 1357, as a result of a fresh series of 'requests', a Royal Ordonnance was issued (March), promising sound coinage, that alienated parts of the Royal Domain would be resumed, that the Council would be put upon an efficient salaried basis. The councillors were not to be appointed by the Estates, but something, like in other respects what is called in England the 'Lancastrian experiment' of constitutional government, was promised in France.

Reforms in the Government.

The experiment did not last long however. Early in

the year 1358, King John's cousin, Charles the Bad of Navarre, who had been in prison on suspicion of treason, was released, and came to Paris, where he gave his influence to the constitutional party, to Etienne Marcel and the burghers. Charles was a bird of ill omen. His motives were selfish, and under his influence a cleavage of the state seemed to be threatened, like the cleavage between the Burgundian and Armagnac parties in the early fifteenth century. A dispute between a townsman and the treasurer of the Dauphin about the price of a couple of horses resulted, first, in the execution of the townsman, and then in the murder of two royal officials. It was just after this that Charles the Bad arrived. The Dauphin quitted Paris for Meaux, and looked as if he was going to abandon the programme of constitutional and administrative reform. Marcel began to organize the Paris *bourgeoisie* to maintain their cause, when the sudden outbreak of the Jacquerie cast upon all opposition to the royal authority the suspicion of violent revolution.

Outbreak of the Jacquerie.

The rising of the peasants, the Jacques, was brought about by the great war, and by the maladministration of government, as was the revolt of the English peasants in 1381, although these had nothing like so great provocation as the French. The position of the French peasantry was a sad one, overtaxed by government and noble alike, abandoned by their lords, plundered and ruined by the Free Companies, who were often of their own countrymen. When their homes were burned they drove their cattle into the woods or fled to live like dogs in caves. The first rising took place at the end of May 1358, when the peasants of the Beauvaisis rose against both the gentlemen and a body of French men-at-arms, who, being unpaid during the truce with the English, were living upon the country. As was usual in such

popular movements in the Middle Ages, a 'captain', William Karle, was at the head of the peasants, giving them some form of organization. The movement spread through the north of France. Froissart, always biased in favour of courts, tells (chapter clxxxii) of horrible deeds which the Jacques committed; modern historians have put aside the evidence of torture and ravishing, confirming however the plundering of châteaux and the massacring of nobles. Etienne Marcel protested against the excesses of the Jacques, yet joined his cause with them to compel reform from the Dauphin. The burghers and William Karle's Jacques made a common expedition against Ermonville, the château of one of the hated royal councillors, Robert de Lorris, and burned it. Then they separated. The burghers proceeded towards Meaux where the Dauphin was; the Jacques returned to the Beauvaisis.

Governments may often be weak, and apparently at the mercy of popular tumult, but they generally have the services of some trained, resolute men who can handle a difficult situation if given a free hand. So it happened on this occasion. The burgher forces, with a number of peasants, had entered Meaux on June 9. A little later two noblemen of the south, who had been on Crusade with the Teutonic knights against the heathen Prussians, passed that way with forty lances. One of them bore a title famous in the Hundred Years War; he was Jean de Grailli, 'Captal' de Buch. The noblemen and their men-at-arms vigorously attacked the burghers, put them to flight, and drove them out of Meaux with great slaughter.

The revolt quelled. 1358.

At the same time the Jacques had been dispersed, by vigour and by treachery. Charles of Navarre, the supposed patron of the popular cause, had got the leader of

the Jacques into his hands, and treacherously held him prisoner. The rest, without a leader, were soon dispersed. Their fate was the common fate of mediaeval rebels. They were hunted down, burned out of their refuges, killed. A pitiless revenge was exacted, and their last state was worse than the first.

Etienne Marcel appeals to Flanders.

Thus both the constitutional and the revolutionary cause fell at the same time. Etienne Marcel was still master of Paris. In a nobly written letter to the communes of Flanders he implored their sympathy and support in the cause of good government, a cause so precious to all good merchants. 'And to defend the honour of the good city of Paris, and to prevent us, who have always been free, from falling into servitude, into which the gentlemen, who are more villain than gentle, wish to put us, we will expose our bodies and our goods, and will die, before we will suffer them to put us into servitude.' But his authority was not secure among the burghers, and all his vigilance was required. On the night of July 31 he was making the round of the gates of Paris, when an argument arose with a guard, and Etienne Marcel was killed. With him died the cause of constitutional reform in Paris. The Dauphin entered the city in August, wisely pardoned the opposition, and resumed the reins of government. It was a victory for absolutism, and the long continuance of the foreign war made absolutism permanent.

1358.

His death.

Charles the Bad and the Dauphin.

Unfortunate France was now exposed to foreign invasion and civil war at the same time. The county of Normandy and even the country up to Paris itself was harried by English mercenary companies; while Charles the Bad had his own forces, and in his chief stronghold in Melun on the Seine, above Paris, thought to hold the balance of power in the kingdom. The Dauphin had

only the slightest resources in men or money. But the localities offered a surprisingly good resistance to the English bands. For in those days the difference in quality between regular troops and armed inhabitants was not so marked as it is now. The citizens of Rouen for instance, in 1359, were able with their own resources to organize a defence and to preserve themselves from the invaders.

Bertrand du Guesclin.

The Dauphin showed some energy in dealing with Charles the Bad. Collecting a small army, in which the young Breton captain, Bertrand du Guesclin, is noticeable, he went to besiege Melun. Charles the Bad was ready for terms, as he seemed to be getting little good from his connexion with Edward III. In August 1359 he entered into a treaty with the Dauphin, receiving a guarantee of all his landed possessions in France and 600,000 crowns in addition.[1] Next year the Dauphin was able to conclude peace with his other adversary, Edward III of England. The English king had again invaded France, but although he traversed most of northern France he made little advance towards definite success, for the French were now adopting the policy of abandoning the country-side to the invaders, and holding on simply to the castles and walled towns. The English might devastate the country-side, but as they had not sufficient forces to occupy it as a whole they could not starve out the castles and towns; far away from England, in country which they themselves had made desolate, it was they who were in danger of starvation. The Pope, Innocent VI, through his legate the Abbot of Cluny, was constant in urging peace. In April 1360 the French and English deputies met at Brétigny, a small

Peace with England.

[1] An *écu d'or* equalled about $13\frac{1}{3}$ francs in modern money.

village near Chartres. There the preliminaries of a treaty were drawn up which was ratified by Edward III and his captive King John in October at Calais. The chief terms were: (1) that the French crown should cede to the English King Calais with its surrounding district, and Ponthieu in the north-east, and Poitou, Agen, Périgord, Limoges, and a few other counties in the west and south-west, thus restoring Guienne to something like its ancient limits; (2) these possessions were to be held by the English King by the same title as that by which the King of France had held them, that is to say, there would be no inconvenient ties of vassalage or homage on the part of the English towards the French crown; in return Edward III renounced his claim and pretensions to the French crown; (3) the captive King John was to be released for a ransom of three million gold crowns, the first instalment of 600,000 to be paid within four months. As a result of the great war, so far as it had now gone, the English power had not disappeared from France. On the contrary, it occupied more of French territory than it had done since the days of King John, son of Henry II. France had lost some of her finest land, and the rest had been ravaged and thrown back into want and misery.

Terms of Peace.

Twenty years more of suffering and hard work were required before the French could regain their lost lands. Even by the end of Charles V's reign in 1380 they had not driven the English from Guienne or Calais, nor were they to do so for three generations. But between the Peace of Calais in 1360 and the death of Charles V in 1380 they were able to accomplish much.

The first thing was to get rid of the Free Companies. These bands of soldiers, English, Gascons, Hainaulters, Spanish, Italians, under their experienced captains, re-

The Free Companies of soldiers.

fused to evacuate the country when the Peace of Calais was made, and Edward III had not the power to compel them to withdraw. All he could do was to withhold his own commission from them, and to send them no pay. The companies did not care. War was their profession, and plunder was their pay. So now, for the next five years, there existed in France a state of affairs surprisingly like that in the Thirty Years War in Germany, in the first half of the seventeenth century. Armed bands, nominally attached to the English cause, established themselves in strong places in every province of France. Each company was organized under its captain, and observed military discipline. They exacted contributions from the country around; the ransoms of prisoners were entered in the companies' accounts, kept by some clerk, a soldier student or runaway monk. The captains and well-to-do soldiers of the companies might have their wives with them, they lived in the houses they had seized, attended by valets, dining off tables, served with choice food. When one district was exhausted the company would move off to another, accompanied by the traders who followed its movements to buy the plunder, which they themselves disposed of elsewhere. Where the company went the villages had to pay blackmail, if they wished to be spared the horrors of the sack; houses would be burned, women violated, children taken to be made the pages of the brutal captains and their mistresses, men would be tortured, their teeth broken, their flesh mutilated, and they would be dragged from place to place, bound by a rope, like a troop of led horses. Rapid in their movements, and—owing to their numbers and their *esprit de corps*—having information from every part of the country, the Free Companies were very difficult to bring to bay. In the late summer of

The Great Company.

1360, just before the Peace of Calais, several of these bands joined together under the name of the Great Company, and marched from the north of France through the still comparatively unspoiled regions of the east and south-east. Unable to take the great towns on their way, Auxerre, Dijon, Lyons, they exacted great sums from the country between. They seized Pont-Saint-Esprit on the Rhone, where money collected to pay King John's ransom was supposed to be deposited, and from there plundered up to the walls of Avignon. In vain Innocent VI preached the crusade against them; bought off by the Pope, the Great Company divided; some went to southern Spain to follow their fortune there; others, under Sir John Hawkwood, to Italy, to sell their sword to any of the numerous princes or towns who required such services. But there were plenty of Free Companies left in France, and others soon returned to it. In April 1362 the authorities in Languedoc organized a regular war against them. The companies united, and, numbering 15,000 men, met the royal forces at Brignais, eighteen miles south of Lyons, and gained a complete victory; and 'incontinent after the discomfiture of Brignais they entered and spread abroad in the county of Forez and pilled and wasted all the country except the fortress, and because they were so great a company, almost nothing held against them'.[1]

Bertrand du Guesclin.

The gradual recovery of France for her own people was due to Bertrand du Guesclin. This man belonged to the new type of soldier which the Hundred Years War produced, and he was almost the first of the kind to appear on the French side. Till du Guesclin rose to high command the French had fought in the old feudal

[1] Froissart, chap. ccxv. See also Lavisse, op. cit., pp. 161–6; S. Luce, *La Jeunesse de Bertrand du Guesclin*, pp. 315–42.

fashion, relying upon the knights and mounted men-at-arms, and giving the chief place to noblemen, who were soldiers only when there was fighting to be done. But du Guesclin was a life-long soldier, and his only interests were in defeating the enemy. Born in 1320, the son of a Breton gentleman of no great means, he had grown up in his father's manor of La Motte-Broon, between Rennes and Dinan, away from courts and the false chivalry of the day. Except his strong body, his vigorous movements, he seemed to have nothing to recommend him. He is said to have been swarthy, ugly, rude-mannered, and his parents took little pride in him, though he was the eldest of their ten children. His education can only have been very slight, for what has come down from his boyhood is stories of fights with other boys, or even with grown peasants. Yet although denied the advantages of richer youths, he grew up with the greatest aptitude in the use of arms; and when the war in Brittany broke out, in 1343, he learned in fighting the English there to see wherein their success lay. Just as Edward III, by paying successful captains to raise soldiers for him, had created a professional army infinitely superior for fighting purposes to the old feudal levy, so Bertrand du Guesclin became a professional captain too, followed not by squires and vassals, but by soldiers at a fixed wage, completely at his command and the king's. Unpopular at the court because of his rough manners, du Guesclin was yet appreciated properly for his military qualities. He saw carefully to the proper feeding of his soldiers, insisted on their punctual payment, though the royal treasury was all but empty, and never exposed their lives, except for a useful object and with a reasonable prospect of success. He taught the French to avoid pitched battles as far as possible, to keep to

He creates a professional army.

their strong places, and to wear out the English, by continual pressure, by leaving them no means of subsistence wherever their forces marched, and by reducing outlying fortresses, wherever opportunity offered. He is the prototype of the French generals who, under Louis XIV or Napoleon at a later time, have become familiar to historians. A man of iron physique, of nervous strength, and quick movements—warfare with him was a science; the task with which he had to deal required a comprehensive mind, immovable determination, endless patience.

He defeats Charles the Bad.

Du Guesclin's first important service in the period after the Treaty of Calais was to give the final blow to the power of Charles the Bad of Navarre. Charles still had forces of his own and acted as an independent power in France, and even received some of the Free Companies into his service. Du Guesclin first captured his two strong towns, Mantes and Meulan, and then surprised and scattered his forces, though commanded by the experienced and vigorous Captal de Buch, near Cocherel, on the river Eure in Normandy, on May 16, 1364. Charles was given good terms, and restored to his honours in France, but his wings had been clipped. In Brittany du Guesclin was less successful, and the French cause received a check. After his victory at Cocherel Bertrand for the moment left the service of Charles V (King John, unable to pay the English ransom, had gone back and died in England) and entered that of Charles of Blois who was still fighting for the Duchy of Brittany, against John of Montfort, the rival claimant, who was recognized and supported by Edward III. In an attempt to relieve the Castle of Aurai, which John of Montfort was besieging with the English captains, Sir John Chandos and Robert Knolles, du Guesclin was defeated and captured, and his master, Charles of Blois,

Du Guesclin fails in Brittany.

Sept. 24, 1364.

killed. John of Montfort became Duke of Brittany and held it to the English alliance.

But du Guesclin was too valuable a soldier to be left in captivity, and Charles V himself subscribed the money for his ransom. A new sphere of activity was found for him, in which he was able to deliver France from the scourge of the Free Companies, and to deal a severe blow at the English power. This sphere was Castile. Du Guesclin sent to Castile.

Spain at this time was divided among three powers— the kingdom of Aragon in the central tableland and the south-east, the kingdom of Castile and Leon, in the north and south-west, from Galicia to Cordova and Seville, and the Mahommedan power in the extreme south, in Granada and Cadiz. In 1365 the Crown of Castile was in dispute between Don Pedro, the lawful successor of the last king, Alphonso XI, and his half-brother, Don Henry of Trastamara, the eldest son of Alphonso XI and his mistress, Leonora de Guzman. Don Pedro had been reigning since 1350, grinding the people with heavy taxes, and putting inconvenient persons out of the way by murders. Having been married to Charles V's sister-in-law, Blanche of Bourbon, a woman whose character was far too good for him, he had put her away, and taken back a former mistress instead. The Pope, Urban V, had excommunicated him, and his subjects had risen. Queen Blanche died miserably in Spain, and in France it was believed she had been murdered. Spain.

At the end of the year 1365 du Guesclin, with an army raised from the Free Companies, including Englishmen like the renowned captain, Sir Hugh Calverley, who flocked to his standard for the chance of pay and booty in Spain, crossed the Pyrenees and drove out the hated Don Pedro. On April 6, 1366, Henry of Trastamara was crowned King of Castile, and that valuable country was now secured against the power of England. Du Guesclin helps Henry of Trastamara to the throne.

There was still to be fighting for Castile, however. Don Pedro betook himself to the Black Prince, now governor of Guienne, and proposed an alliance. An expedition was organized: the Free Companies rejoined their famous general, and in February 1367 the Black Prince and 12,000 men marched from Guienne to Castile through Navarre, and the famous pass of Roncesvalles. At Najara or Navarette, for the fight took place between both places, Don Henry of Trastamara and Bertrand du Guesclin met the forces of Don Pedro and the Black Prince, and for the second time in his life du Guesclin, fighting furiously, was taken prisoner by the English. Don Pedro was restored to the throne of Castile, but Don Henry escaped to France, where he hired some Free Companies to make war upon the English in Guienne. The Black Prince's army wasted away, unpaid and uncared for by the ungrateful Don Pedro. Sick in body and at heart, the Black Prince returned, with a shattered army, to save Guienne. The two heroes, du Guesclin and his captor the Black Prince, had some mutual sympathy, and when the Frenchman demanded his liberty, saying he had 'heard for long the mice and the rats, but not the song of the birds', Edward asked him to fix his own ransom. The proud though poor Breton soldier named 100,000 florins, and refused to listen to the Black Prince's offer of release for 25,000. At last he consented to be ransomed for a sum of 60,000, which Charles V willingly arranged to pay. Next year the indefatigable soldier was back in Castile with Don Henry of Trastamara. In December they met at Montiel the forces of Don Pedro, whom they defeated and captured. The cruel king and his bastard brother quarrelled and fought when they met, and Don Henry was only saved by an attendant knight; Pedro was then slain by his brother. Despite the revolutions through

Don Pedro and the Black Prince defeat du Guesclin.

Du Guesclin released, rejoins Henry of Trastamara. They defeat Don Pedro.

which he had passed, and the ambiguous manner in which he at last came to the throne, Don Henry made a good King of Castile, faithful to the liberties of the Estates (called the Cortes), and a valuable ally of Charles V. Guienne, between Castile on the one side and the kingdom of France on the other, suffered severely. The English resources had been strained too far. The Black Prince had lost his health, and Edward III was long past his prime. On the sea, where the English had always been strong, the Castilian fleet turned the balance in favour of the French. When in 1372 a great expedition was organized from England to invade France from Guienne (for war had formally broken out between the two countries in 1369), Don Henry's fleet met it off La Rochelle, on June 23, 1372, and in a battle which lasted two days destroyed practically the whole English fleet, and took their leader, the Earl of Pembroke, prisoner. Naval and military success had now passed from the hands of the English. In October 1370 the heroic du Guesclin had been made Constable of France, and thus entrusted with the whole conduct of the war with England. Then began a war of surprises and of sieges, in which the activity and the wonderful swiftness of du Guesclin gave him every advantage over the now disorganized and demoralized English companies, spread over great tracts of country. In 1372 Poitou was recovered, its towns and fortresses captured one by one; Brittany was invaded, and its Duke, John IV of Montfort, the English protégé and ally, forced to flee. In August 1373 the English government made a great effort, and sent the Duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt, with an army of 15,000 to Calais. John marched through France from Calais to Bordeaux, by Artois, Picardy, and Champagne, Burgundy, Auvergne. The army had to march slowly, in close order, lest the watchful Constable of

Guienne hard pressed.

English fleet defeated by Don Henry.

Du Guesclin, Constable of France.

He regains Poitou and Brittany.

France should cut off any companies or stragglers that got separated. The English pillaged and burned as they went, but du Guesclin offered no battle, and there was no chance of repeating the successes of Crécy and Poitiers.

John of Gaunt's expedition to France fails.

When the Duke of Lancaster reached Bordeaux he had lost one half of his army, and du Guesclin, though he gained much odium by his 'Fabian' policy, his lack of spirit as some people thought, had decisively defeated the English without a battle. For the rest of Edward III's reign the English government was sufficiently occupied with meeting the raids of French or Castilian ships on the English coast. In 1375 they were glad to conclude a truce. In 1378 war broke out again, but du Guesclin

Death of du Guesclin.

drove the English off disastrously from St. Malo. On July 13, 1380, the great Constable met his death, having fallen ill when engaged in hunting down some Free Companies which still existed and were harrying Languedoc. He lived long enough to see the fall of the small fortress, Châteauneuf-de-Randon, which he was besieging. Then he gave up his sword to an officer to carry to the King whom he had served so faithfully, received the sacraments with the utmost devotion, and so at the age of sixty-five ended a life of untiring, honourable service. With the exception of the loss of Calais, the kingdom of France stood much as it had done before the fearful war had started in 1338. Charles V, who was to follow the great Constable to the grave two months later, had reorganized the administration carefully, on a bureaucratic rather than a constitutional basis indeed, but most efficiently, and the ills caused by the long war had been largely repaired. When the next century opened France was well equipped for the renewal of the struggle, though she had forgotten the lessons taught by the great Constable.

September 16, 1380, death of Charles V.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EMPIRE, 1314–1437

1. To the Accession of Sigismund

With the death of Henry VII in the monastery of Buonconvento near Siena on August 24, 1313, the Crown of Germany passed out of the Luxemburg family for a generation. His son, the knight errant King John of Bohemia, being only seventeen years old, was considered too young to keep order among the princes and cities of Germany. The most probable successor to Henry VII seemed to be Frederick the Fair of Austria, but the choice of a majority of the Electors fell upon the Duke Louis of Bavaria, of the ancient House of Wittelsbach, which had loyally supported the Ghibeline emperors in the two previous centuries.

Louis of Bavaria, King of Germany, Oct. 20, 1314.

Louis the Bavarian was a man who would have been judged capable of being emperor, if he had never come to the throne.[1] Strong and vigorous in body, with regular features, flashing eyes, and the long flaxen hair of the old Germans, he seemed to bring with him an air of the great Emperor Barbarossa. As duke he had certainly shown himself capable enough, and at the head of the Bavarian cities had inflicted a signal defeat at Gamelsdorf[2] on Frederick of Austria, who, like his brother Leopold, was a strong upholder of the feudal theory, and an opponent of free institutions. But as Emperor, Louis was weak and vacillating. Bursts of activity were

Nov. 6, 1313.

[1] Cp. Tacitus, *Hist.* i. 49, of Galba, 'capax imperii nisi imperasset'.
[2] In Upper Bavaria.

followed by periods of weakness, almost of cringing. The lack of a sustained policy ruined his cause in his struggle with the Papacy. At one time he denied the whole theory of the temporal power, and proudly proclaimed the independence and supremacy of the Empire: at another he was abjectly throwing his crown at the feet of the Pope, till his own supporters turned away in disgust. Yet out of this struggle between Pope and Empire, though poorly fought by Louis, there emerges the theory of the supreme and secular state, which is the characteristic feature of Modern Europe.

Louis defeats Frederick of Austria.

Frederick the Fair of Austria did not acquiesce in the elevation of Louis of Bavaria, and for eight years a desultory war was carried on in South Germany; the cities, however, and also John of Bohemia, and Frederick IV, Count of Hohenzollern, gave their support to Louis. On September 28, 1322, the forces of the rivals met at Ampfing near the town of Mühldorf in Bavaria; the Habsburg cause was defeated; no less than three-and-twenty of the noble house of Trautmannsdorf are said to have been left dead on the field, and Frederick the Fair himself was a captive in the hands of the Bavarians.

Louis sends help to the Visconti.

Louis meanwhile, like so many of the Mediaeval Emperors, had been unable to resist the fascination of Italy. The Visconti of Milan were Ghibelines, and were extending their power around, at the expense of the State of the Church. Louis sent some help to them, and was accordingly in 1324 excommunicated by Pope John XXII. Louis, however, had friends now in the enemy's camp. The Fraticelli, who were being persecuted by the Papacy, were particularly strong in Germany, where their simple habits and wandering missionary life made them popular with the people. Marsiglio of Padua and the English

Franciscan, William of Occam, upheld the theory of the secular power. In Germany the civil war came to an end. In 1325 Louis offered peace and friendship to his prisoner, Frederick of Austria, on condition that he should also bring to terms his indomitable brother Leopold. But Leopold would not give up the struggle. Frederick therefore, though the Pope had released him from his oath to Louis, returned to captivity, but Louis treated his generous adversary with equal generosity, offered his friendship again, shared his table with him, and made him partner of his throne. The Electors naturally protested against this arrangement, as an invasion of their right to appoint to the throne, and Frederick had to do without the title of emperor, though he shared in the administration of Germany. In 1326 Leopold of Austria died, and for four years, till the death of Frederick in 1330, Germany at last was in peace.

Louis shares his throne with Frederick.

It was during this good period, when Germany was quiet and the noble Frederick watching after his interests, that Louis decided to go to Rome, to set the seal, by a coronation-ceremony there, upon his lofty imperial claims. This journey, however, which seemed to show his triumph at last, only brought sorrows to the Emperor. It made peace with the Avignon Papacy henceforth impossible, and renewed a struggle which the Emperor had not the sustained strength to deal with.

Louis goes to Rome.

In 1327 Louis crossed the Alps into Italy, by the historic Brenner route, accompanied it is said by only 200 knights; but with these there would necessarily be squires and servants, and with support received from the Ghibelines Louis was able to show a constraining force wherever he went. He entered Milan on May 13, and was crowned with the Iron Crown of Lombardy. Gradually he worked his way to Rome, which he entered

1327.

Louis is crowned.

on July 7, 1328. The Roman people had always claimed the right at least of approving the election of both the Emperor and the Pope. Now in St. Peter's Church they witnessed and approved the coronation of Louis. Yet a greater act still was to be witnessed. John XXII would never agree to such an election, which expressly excluded any participation by the Pope. If the Roman people could elect an emperor, the Roman clergy and people could also elect a pope. Accordingly, on May 12, the Franciscan monk Peter was elected Pope, by some Roman bishops and by the acclamation of the populace. Such an election was against the principles of the Lateran Decree of 1059, which placed the election of a pope in the hands of the cardinals, but election by the Roman clergy and people had precedents of a much older date.

An anti-pope elected.

At the end of two years (January 1330) Louis left Italy, and returned to Germany, on the death of Frederick. He was still unreconciled to the Papacy, although his anti-pope did not command any great measure of allegiance. John XXII naturally refused to take the sentence of excommunication off Louis, and also in 1334 declared Italy to be for ever detached and independent of the Empire. The Germans as a whole, especially the cities, resented the interference of the French pope, and would have followed Louis loyally enough if he had given them a firm lead. Yet even in the later and more sceptical Middle Ages people did not like to be under excommunication, and when Benedict XII succeeded John XXII in 1334 and still kept the ban of the Church upon the Emperor, Louis began to lose confidence. Seven times Louis is said to have humbled himself and begged for peace. At last, in May 1338, the Emperor took advantage of the now aroused national spirit, and summoned the Diet to Frankfort. The princes, the lower

Louis summons the Diet.

nobility, the Free Imperial Knights, and the cities were strongly represented. Now at last Louis stood forth as a German king, with a large majority of the German people at his back. From Frankfort the Electors, assured by the Diet of the support of all classes of the community, went to the famous 'Königsstuhl', at Rense near Coblenz, and solemnly declared that the supreme German emperor received his authority by the election of the German princes alone, without any ratification or coronation by the Pope; that the Emperor was not a vassal, but on the contrary was the protector of the Church; and that papal bulls could not be introduced into Germany without the consent of the German bishops. This was one of the great days of the Mediaeval Empire, when it shook itself free from the toils of Italy and of the Papacy, and stood forth, expressing the unity and the strength of the German people. But the German people, as Aeneas Sylvius said later, were ruined by their many masters. The princes were too independent, divided as they were by party faction and by family ambition. Nor was Louis the Bavarian the man to keep the people firmly united behind him. His alliance with Edward III of England at this time against France might have helped him against the Avignon Papacy had he persisted in it, but he gave it up again in hopes of being reconciled to the Papacy. King John of Bohemia, who had a family alliance with King Philip of Valois, stirred up trouble in Germany along with the Habsburgs. Clement VI renewed the excommunication. Louis' nerve failed him again. He offered to submit his crown to the Pope. The policy of the Papacy, good or bad, has generally had the merit of steadfastness, and by steadfastness it now succeeded. The Electors were disgusted with Louis' feebleness, and when Clement VI suggested that an

July 15, 1338.

Germany united, but only momentarily.

Louis seeks pardon of the Pope.

emperor should be chosen from the distinguished and orthodox House of Luxemburg a sufficient party was found to support the claim. King John of Bohemia was forty-nine, a moderately advanced age for the Middle Ages, had been blinded in a war against the Poles, and was now worn out by a life of continual movement, hard fighting and adventure; but his son Charles, cool, calculating, trained in the diplomacy of the Valois court, was an able candidate for any position. On July 11, 1346, he was elected by a majority of the Electors at Rense, and crowned at Bonn four months later. Then, true to his French alliance, King John took his son the Emperor to serve with Philip of Valois against the invasion of the English. On August 26 John fell on the fatal field of Crécy; Charles saved himself by flight. Louis the Bavarian still held his own in Germany, through the strength of his own duchy and the support of the South German cities. The next year, however, on October 11, 1347, he died of apoplexy when hunting bears in the Fürstenfeld, outside Munich.

Charles of Bohemia elected in his stead.

Louis' reign a landmark.

Louis' reign is a landmark in the history of the struggle between the State and the Church. Under him the jurisdiction of the Church was defined, and its power relegated to purely ecclesiastical matters. Louis even went further, and assumed the power of separating man and wife. In 1335 Margaret Maultasche, the heiress of Carinthia, had married John, a younger son of King John of Bohemia. The young John was only eight years old. In 1342 Louis, at Margaret's desire, declared her divorced, and then married her to his own son Louis. It was this act particularly which threw King John of Bohemia on to the side of the Pope and the French. In his own Duchy Louis was a good ruler, fond of country life, and just in his dealings: and he is still remembered for the

Code of Bavarian laws which he had framed and established. Under him the family possessions of the House of Wittelsbach increased enormously. In 1323, on the extinction of the Ascanian family, descended from Albert the Bear, Louis declared Brandenburg escheated to the Crown, and made his son Louis Margrave. The Tyrol and Carinthia were added with Margaret Maultasche, and Holland and Zealand came to him through his own wife. The Palatinate was already in his brother's family. The Wittelsbachs had greater territory than the Habsburgs, and vastly more than the minor princes, the Hohenzollerns.

His laws.

Extension of his territory.

Charles IV was the eldest son of King John of Bohemia, and therefore the grandson of the noble Henry VII. His mother was Elisabeth, sister of Wenceslaus III, the last king of the Premyslides dynasty of Bohemia. Born in 1316, he had been sent at the age of seven to the court of his uncle, Charles IV of France, to be educated. There he changed his name from Wenceslaus or Wenzel to Charles. He grew up a cultivated youth, able it is said to speak five languages. He must have learned, too, something from the able lawyers and clerical statesmen who formed the Council of the King of France, for Charles became an able statesman and a diplomatist highly versed in the ways of men and governments. He belonged to the new type of ruler which had arisen in Italy, the 'prince' who directed all his public actions by deliberate policy rather than by sentiment or by the code of chivalry and feudalism. Thus he was different from his generous, knightly, and restless father John, from Philip of Valois, Edward III, or even Rudolf of Habsburg or Louis the Bavarian. Like all kings of the Middle Ages he had to be a soldier as well as a statesman; but he fought as little as possible,

Charles IV.

and never acted as if warfare was part of the normal life of a ruler. He was selfish and unattractive, but was a good ruler at least in his own kingdom of Bohemia. 'To the Empire', said the Emperor Maximilian I, 'he was a step-father, but to Bohemia a father.' He increased its territory, developed its commerce, made its roads, and created its distinguished University.

The Black Death.

During the years 1348 and 1349 Germany was visited by the Black Death, and although the usual tales of its destructiveness are related, as that nearly 125,000 Franciscan Friars died of it there, it is also noted that less people died in Germany than in the other countries of Europe which it visited. The reason for this may be that civic life was more highly developed in Germany than elsewhere: Aeneas Sylvius commends the cities there for their spaciousness and cleanness—qualities for which they were no doubt distinguished, compared with the other cities of Europe, though greatly below the standard of urban cleanness of the present day. Thus Germany recovered quickly from the Black Death, and Charles, now recognized emperor by all at home (Günther of Schwartzburg whom the Bavarian party set up as a rival emperor died in 1349), thought to go to Italy.

Charles goes to Rome.

Somehow or other a journey to Rome was still considered necessary to the prestige of a new emperor. Charles himself had no delusions about ruling over Italy. When in 1349 the Roman tribune Rienzi came to Prague, and urged him to come to Rome, and offered to gain the whole of Italy for his Empire, Charles listened coldly, and put the Tribune in prison till the Pope should want him. Yet five years later the Emperor went to Italy, and gradually worked his way to Rome. But by agreement with Pope Clement VI, who remained at Avignon, he stayed in the Holy City only for a few hours, just

long enough to be crowned in St. Peter's, two days before Easter (1355). Then he returned to Germany, having gained much money by selling the ancient legal rights of the Empire over particular localities, to princes and cities. Petrarch, who had looked to him as Dante looked to Henry VII of Luxemburg, was filled with sorrow and contempt. The political connexion of Germany with Italy may at this point be considered as ended.

He severs connexion of Empire with Papacy.

At the same time that Charles IV severed the ties of Germany and Italy, he severed another link which for over a century had been growing steadily weaker—the political link between the Empire and the Papacy. Up till then the popes had claimed that the elected King of the Germans (or King of the Romans, as he was called) was no emperor till anointed and crowned by the Pope. In 1338, during the struggle between Louis the Bavarian and Clement VI, the Electors had explicitly denied this, and declared that the choice of an emperor lay solely with God and with themselves. It was left for Charles, although he was known in Germany as the 'Priests' King', the sworn dependant of the Pope, to give the final legal blow to the papal claim. In 1356 he published the Golden Bull. This famous document may be called the written constitution of the Mediaeval Empire, no longer either Holy or Roman in anything but name. It put the imperial position on a purely secular and German basis, and although it was henceforward possible for a foreigner to stand for election, as did Henry VIII of England, no foreigner, as a matter of fact, was ever afterwards elected.

The Golden Bull, Dec. 25, 1356.

The Golden Bull defined the Electoral College, with which the election of an emperor was always to lie. Although now for a hundred years there had been seven Electors in Germany their position had never been defined, and it was doubtful whether they were the only

The Electors.

legal Electors; a minority of the seven had frequently disagreed with the majority and had refused to recognize their choice. Double elections had distracted Germany and weakened the imperial position. The Lay Electors, too, had not in their own domains yet adopted the principle of primogeniture. Thus there might be several branches of the same family, each ruling a princely territory, each claiming the electoral position. The Golden Bull laid down that the seven Electors should be the three great Archbishops—Mainz, Trèves, and Cologne, as titular arch-chancellors of Germany, Burgundy, Italy; the four secular Electors, the King of Bohemia, the Count Palatine of the Rhine, the Duke of Saxony, and the Margrave of Brandenburg. The offices supposed to be performed by these princes were respectively those of arch-winebearer, arch-steward, arch-marshal, and arch-chamberlain. The competing houses of Bavaria (Wittelsbach) and Saxe-Lauenburg (Wettin) were excluded, in favour of the Palatine and Saxe-Wittenberg branches of the same family.

The Electors were thus raised into a separate grade, a corporation within the Empire, and within the Imperial Diet when it met. They also formed the standing Council of the Empire, but they met only occasionally, when summoned by the Emperor. In their own territories they were made practically kings. They could strike their own money, and from their own law courts there lay no appeal to the Emperor's court. The high position thus conceded to the Electors was a blow to the other nobles and to the cities, and it helped in many ways to divide and weaken Germany. It prevented indeed double elections, as the Bull stated that the choice of a majority of the seven should be final; but although there could now be only one emperor at a time, his power could be effectually confined by the treaty which the Electoral College always made with

the candidate they were going to choose. The other provisions of the Golden Bull, for instance to preserve the public peace, were better in intention than in effect.

Charles's reign is more noted for the internal development of the country, particularly of Bohemia, than for striking events. In 1365 he visited Urban V at Avignon, and again in 1368 at Rome, where he performed the duties of a deacon (the Holy Roman Emperor was always considered to be in deacon's orders) during a service in St. Peter's conducted by the Pope. Charles IV thus skilfully healed the old wounds, and reconciled the Empire to the Papacy. At the same time he had excluded the Papacy by law from all participation in the temporal affairs of Germany, and yet had helped to detach the popes from the influence of France.

Charles visits the Pope.

On returning to Germany he went on with his task of adding to the domains of his house. Silesia was made an inseparable inheritance of the Bohemian crown. Brandenburg was obtained from the house of Wittelsbach in 1373. Bohemia flourished and is said to have become like a smiling garden. The Moldau and the Elbe were used as a navigable highway to the North Sea, the manufacture of cloth was established in Silesia by the introduction of Flemish weavers; even outside Charles's personal dominions this peaceful and beneficial influence was felt. The Bohemian historian Balbin remarks that the age of Charles IV was an age of masons and architects. He founded the great University of Prague in 1348, and built the noble towers and bridges for which Prague has become so famous. Other princes followed his example, and promoted the works of peace rather than of war. In 1365 the University of Vienna was founded by the Habsburg family, and in 1386 Heidelberg, the most romantic and beloved University of Germany,

He improves his own country.

by the Wittelsbachs of the Palatinate. In 1388 the Archbishop of Cologne established a university in his own city, but the ecclesiastical Universities of Germany, like those in Rome, never attained to any great eminence.

Civil war breaks out.

Before the end of Charles IV's reign the calamity of civil war again took place in Germany. Eberhard, Duke of Würtemberg, was hostile to the liberties of the chief southern cities, and for years there had been trouble before the cities formed a great league against him in 1377. One of the chapters of the Golden Bull had forbidden the cities to accept Pfahlbürger, that is, to extend their influence in the country around by taking peasants who lived outside the walls under their protection. This chapter was the cause of disputes between the cities and the nobles. The 'war of the cities' lasted for twelve years (1377–89), but the cities were all successful in maintaining their freedom, although they suffered a severe defeat at the hands of Eberhard at Döffingen in 1388.

First use of gunpowder in Germany.

Wealthy and intelligent, they were the first in Germany to adopt the use of gunpowder. It was in Augsburg that the celebrated John of Aarau began making his iron cannon in 1372. Against gunpowder the weapons of chivalry were at an obvious disadvantage, and feudalism as a political system was doomed.

Death of Charles IV.

Charles IV died in his castle at Prague on November 29, 1378. He is not a popular figure in German history, for he was a Slav in appearance and a Frenchman in manners. From his Bohemian mother he received the thick-set figure, the high cheek-bones, the black hair of the Czech. He was round-shouldered, and his head drooped forwards. At the French court he had grown up to be fond of fine attire, and it is said that he seldom laid aside the imperial crown and mantle. Such a figure did not satisfy the old Germans, either noble or simple. The

ideal of the nobles was the armoured knight, brave, joyful, open-handed. The ideal of the commons was the judge, the peace-keeper, the careful father of his people. Barbarossa was held to represent both ideals in Germany in the twelfth century, but Charles IV fell far below in popular estimation. His actual record is better than his reputation.

Wenzel becomes King.

Charles IV had succeeded in getting his eldest son Wenzel elected king during his own lifetime. On his father's death, therefore, Wenzel succeeded quietly to the imperial throne. During his reign the princes of Germany grew yet more independent of each other and of the Emperor, and the Swiss succeeded in throwing off the rule of the Habsburgs. Galeazzo Visconti was recognized as Duke of Milan and the surrounding country, so that, except for the feudal allegiance (a merely nominal relation) of the Duke, the Empire lost all claims upon the Milanese territory. Wenzel's one real act of statesmanship was to divide the Empire into seven circles in 1389. Each circle was to be responsible for the keeping of its own peace, by raising the necessary troops to meet a foreign enemy, and policing its own territory. Personally, Wenzel seems to have been a man early spoiled by too much power. In him it appears as if one of the later Roman emperors, whose tyranny and viciousness are so graphically described by Gibbon, were born again. He was given to joking in a rude way, and to drinking. Great hunting hounds followed him about everywhere, and one of these killed Wenzel's queen, Joanna, in 1392. His cruelty and drunkenness made him despised and feared. Among his victims was Johann von Nepomuk, a priest of Prague, who was put upon the rack in order that he might be forced to confess the supposed treason of the Archbishop. When Nepomuk refused he

(Battle of Sempach, July 9, 1386.)

He divides his Empire into seven circles.

was burned, Wenzel himself actively assisting to burn him with a torch. The body was thrown into the Moldau where the chief bridge spanned it. He was early reputed to be a saint by the people, and, as St. Nepomuk, became the patron saint of bridges. In 1400 the Electors met at Oberlahnstein, and declared the deposition of Wenzel. In his place they raised up Rupert, the Count Palatine, of the second branch of the House of Wittelsbach.

Wenzel deposed.

Rupert Emperor.

Rupert reigned for ten years without ruling. Wenzel the Luxemburger was still alive and strong in Bohemia, and refused, of course, to recognize Rupert as emperor.

Defeated at Brescia, 1401.

An expedition made in company with Leopold of Austria (whose father had been killed at Sempach) into Italy, to gain prestige for his imperial position, ended in Rupert's defeat at Brescia, where the Visconti's condottiere army proved more than a match for the South German knights. In 1410 Rupert died.

Three rival Emperors.

After the death of Rupert the Empire, as happened to the Papacy four years later, had three heads, all from the House of Luxemburg. Wenzel of Bohemia still called himself emperor, and obtained some recognition until he died, childless, in 1419. Jobst, Margrave of Moravia, a cousin of the Emperor Charles IV, who was said to have nothing great about him but his beard, received two votes. Sigismund, Elector of Brandenburg, the brother of Wenzel, had the votes of Trèves and of the Palatinate, which, added to his own vote, gave him a majority. By the provisions of the Golden Bull Sigismund was thus the legal emperor, and his position was further strengthened by the death of Jobst in 1411.

2. The Councils

Sigismund as Emperor.

Sigismund was the last of the Luxemburgers, and also the last of the emperors (if we except the short reign

of Charles Albert of Bavaria, 1742–5) who was not a Habsburg. An active, intelligent, though somewhat visionary man, he might have made the imperial power a reality in Germany, but for the results of the feeble reigns of Wenzel and Rupert. For the princes had become independent, and between them and the cities it might be said that the Empire was divided into something over 350 States. Thus, when the Empire at last obtained a strong man in Sigismund, and then a line of tenacious hereditary monarchs in the Habsburgs, it was too late. The Empire was merely a loose confederation of States. Yet it remained, till dissolved in 1806, the symbol of German unity, an expression of the national idea. This was its meaning in *modern* times. In the early Middle Ages it was the symbol of European unity, on the temporal side, as the Papacy was (more effectually) the symbol of such unity on the religious side. Now in the later Middle Ages, under Sigismund, the Empire was to act for the last time, and most effectually, as the head of Western Europe. This was when Sigismund brought together a General Council of the Church, and thus put an end to the Great Schism in the Papacy.

Character of Sigismund.

Sigismund was a ruler whose character was spoiled by the power and opportunities for license which he had, yet improved by the responsibilities of power. He was a truly handsome man, with a strong athletic figure, ruddy cheeks, and a tawny beard. As a young man he had been guilty of acts of cruelty, and in his kingdom of Hungary was unpopular with the nobles for his excessive and disgraceful profligacy. Yet there was good in him too, as there was in every member of the Luxemburg House; and after being rebelled against and captured by the Magyar nobles in 1401 he learnt his lesson, and ruled Hungary like a statesman. It is to him that the

The Hungarian Diet.

establishment of the Hungarian Diet was due in 1405. It was divided into two classes, the *Status* or States, which consisted only of the high nobility, and the *Ordines* or Orders, which consisted of deputies from the lower nobility or gentry, and from the cities. He became a great legislator of the type that removes complications in society rather than creates them. He enforced uniform weights and measures throughout his kingdom of Hungary, fixed a standard value for the Hungarian florin, fortified the country strongly against the aggressive Turks, and established a system of military service.

Sigimund's activity.

Sigismund was probably one of the most active men who ever lived. From the time when he became King of Hungary in 1382 till his accession to the Empire in 1410 he spent some time in war every year. The itinerary of his movements, compiled by his learned German biographer, is astounding.[1] And when at rest, not travelling from place to place, besieging towers and castles in Bosnia or Croatia, making expeditions through the east and south-east of Germany, he found time both to keep himself active by jousting at the tourney and to keep his mind fresh by reading and by study. There is much of the Renaissance about him, of the new life that was coming over Europe. From one point of view he was the armoured knight of the Middle Ages, from another the elegant intellectual prince of the age of Erasmus. There was a touch of genius about him, and after Henry V of England he was undoubtedly the most gifted ruler of the time. What he lacked was balance and prudence. He could never adjust his resources to his expenditure. Always in need of money, this splendidly endowed ruler in this as in other respects calls to mind the gifted Emperor Maximilian. Tradition has handed down

[1] Aschbach, *Geschichte Kaiser Sigismunds II*, pp. 430 ff.

a story to illustrate Sigismund's high idea of his imperial position. At the Council of Constance, Sigismund, speaking in Latin, had expressed the hope that 'this unspeakable schism should be eradicated—ut illa *nefanda* schisma eradicetur.' He had made *schisma* feminine instead of neuter. 'Domine,' interrupted the Cardinal of Placentia, 'schisma is neuter.' 'I am the king of the Romans, said Sigismund, and *above grammar*—Ego sum Rex Romanorum et super grammaticam.'

Sigismund was born in 1368, the son of the Emperor Charles IV and his fourth wife, Elisabeth of Pomerania, the granddaughter of Kasimir the Great of Poland. His father made him Margrave of Brandenburg, a state which Sigismund subsequently sold to his friend Frederick of Hohenzollern, in 1415. In 1374 he was betrothed to Maria of Hungary, the daughter of Ladislaus the Great, the last king of the House of Anjou, who reigned not merely over Hungary itself, but over Bulgaria, Serbia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Poland. The Poles, however, would not accept Sigismund as king on the death of Ladislaus in 1382. They preferred the rule of Ladislaus's second daughter Hedwig, who married Jagello of Lithuania, the founder of the line of kings who ruled Poland for nearly 200 years. Sigismund had to fight for his Hungarian dominions, as many of the nobles supported the claims of the Neapolitan House of Anjou to the throne. It was in this long series of small wars that Sigismund bore hardships and dangers, and developed his passion for movement and travel, amid the hard fighting in and out of the Eastern Alps and Carpathians. All this time the Turks were pushing their way up the Danube. At the battle of Nicopolis in 1396 the great army Sigismund had got together, from Hungary, Germany, and even France, was disastrously defeated in Bulgaria by the Sultan Bajazet I. A great

Sigismund married to Maria of Hungary (1385). He fights for Hungary.

His defeat in Bulgaria.

part of the external dominions of Ladislaus the Great was thus lost. Sigismund always hoped to unite Christendom against the Turk, the foe of Europe and the Church, and the healing of the Great Schism was indispensable to such a union.

Pope Urban VI.

When Gregory XI died at Rome on March 27, 1378, the cardinals proceeded, on the loud demand of the Roman populace, to elect an Italian. This was Bartholomew Prignani, Archbishop of Bari, in the kingdom of Naples, an austere, studious man, conscientious both in his religious duties and in administering the affairs of his diocese. On his election to the Papacy Urban VI (this was the name he assumed) at once showed his zeal for reform, and he who had been a humble monk began to rebuke his cardinals, and to enforce an austere régime throughout the whole papal court. Some of the cardinals began to think they had made a mistake in electing Bartholomew Prignani, and longed for the easier days of the Avignon Papacy. Gradually their dissatisfaction took a decisive form; and on September 16, at Fondi, the French cardinals elected Robert of Geneva as pope. He took the name of Clement VII, and set up his court at Avignon. Thus began the Great Schism, with two lines of popes, one ruling from Rome, one from Avignon. Italy (except Naples), Germany, England, Poland, Scandinavia, and Portugal gave allegiance to the Roman line; France, and the allies of France—Angevin Naples, Castile, Scotland—followed the Avignon pope, as did also the kingdom of Aragon.

April 9, 1378.

The Great Schism, 1378–1415.

Clement VII.

The Great Schism was probably more disastrous to the Papacy than was even the Babylonish Captivity. For then at least there were no competitors for the allegiance of Christendom. But now the unity of the Catholic Church was destroyed. Two popes fulminated

against each other, and denied each other's authority. And thus in Europe, though not in the same country, the authority of both popes was denied, and in a sense the Papacy, by being doubled, ceased to exist. The Universal Church therefore ceased to be represented by the Papacy; its power lapsed back to itself, as represented by a General Council of all the prelates and learned churchmen. The period of the Great Schism is therefore the Age of the Councils, first the Council of Pisa, then that of Constance, which unmade the existing popes and created a new one. It was not until 1870 that the Pope was able to establish his position as superior to a General Council.

The Councils.

The Schism brought the Papacy into disrepute, by the spectacle of two popes excommunicating each other, and even proclaiming a crusade against each other. Moreover two papal courts were more expensive than one, and the field for taxation was smaller for each. Therefore the exactions of the popes increased, and they were put to greater shifts for obtaining money. It is during the Great Schism that the sale of indulgences became an especial abuse. The critics of the Papacy, the 'heretics', who were never absent all through the Middle Ages, began to command a larger measure of support. First Wycliffe, then Huss, began to prepare for the greatest schism of all, the Reformation.

The Schism prepares the way for the Reformation.

The stormy reign of Urban VI ended with his death on October 15, 1389; Clement's death followed five years later, September 16, 1394. Each had a successor: the Neapolitan, Peter Tomacelli, was elected by the Roman cardinals and became Boniface IX; the Avignon cardinals, when their turn came to elect, chose the ablest politician among them, the Spaniard Peter de Luna, who took the name of Benedict XIII.

Two new popes.

1389.

Both popes urged to resign.

The evils of the Schism were apparent everywhere. The greater part of Europe acknowledged the Roman pope, for there could be no sincere doubt about the validity of the original election of Urban VI. There were, indeed, political reasons in France for supporting a French pope, and such Clement VII had been. Benedict XIII, however, was a Spaniard, from Aragon, and was not on this account any more acceptable in France than an Italian. The University of Paris, which was then the most influential learned body in Europe, considered Benedict's position to be invalid. In 1398 the Estates of France called upon him to resign: Benedict refused. The great theologian, Pierre d'Ailly, Bishop of Cambrai, was then commissioned to go and persuade both popes to resign, so that their claims might be adjudicated without prejudice. Boniface entertained him courteously in Rome, but explained that he was pope and would remain so. Froissart, in one of the latest pages of his history, has vividly described the fear of the mercenary Romans, lest they should lose the Papacy and the profits which it brought in. Benedict was equally firm, but as Avignon was in France he was exposed to something more than Pierre d'Ailly's diplomatic mission. He was blockaded in his palace at Avignon by Marshal Boucicault, and starved into surrender. For five years he remained a prisoner in his palace, but in 1404, with the aid of King Ladislaus of Naples, he escaped down the Rhone to Château Renaud, a fortress of King Ladislaus. At the same time the Orleanist party in France, which had gained control of the royal court, acknowledged him again as legitimate pope.

Both refuse.

1398.

Where France failed the Empire was to succeed. The stern and vigorous if rather avaricious Boniface died on October 1, 1404. The Roman cardinals then

elected the gentle Innocent VII, who reigned only till November 13, 1405. The Roman cardinals renewed the oath they had taken before the election of Innocent, namely, that whoever should be elected pope would at once resign if the Anti-Pope Benedict resigned also. Then they elected the Cardinal Angelo Corario, a Venetian, aged seventy-nine years. But though both Gregory XII (the new pope) and Benedict XIII, the Venetian and the Spaniard, were sincerely anxious to put an end to the Schism, neither would resign first, in case the other should refuse to do likewise. But the two popes could not now command the allegiance of their own cardinals, and each betook himself to his native country, Gregory to Venice, Benedict to Perpignan. In the same year, 1408, fifteen of the Avignon and Roman cardinals met at Leghorn, and issued a summons to a General Council of the Church.

The Council of Pisa.

The Council met at Pisa on March 26, 1409. 'Under the stately nave of the Cathedral in that city, where the aspiring Lombard, or rather Italian architecture had lifted the roof to a majestic height yet unequalled in Italy, even by Gothic Assisi, and supported it on tall harmonious pillars (even now the noblest model of the Italian basilica, expanded into the Latin cross')[1]—in this lovely building, grouped with the Tower and the Baptistery in the serene and grassy close, there met together twenty-six cardinals, four patriarchs, twelve archbishops, eighty bishops, eighty-seven abbots, all these in person, besides the representatives of many others. The great universities too, including, of course, Paris, Oxford, and Cambridge, were represented by their learned doctors.

Both popes deposed.

The two popes, Angelo Corario and Peter de Luna, were summoned before the Council, and, failing to

[1] Milman, viii. 113.

appear, were solemnly declared to be deposed from the high positions which they claimed. This deposition is the most striking act of the Mediaeval Church, a heroic remedy, which might lead to its destruction. For a duly elected pope (as Gregory XII certainly was) was believed to be the vicegerent of God, and the authority which the Church claimed rested on this theory. If, however, the vicegerent of God could be *unmade* by a General Council, the divine commission which he and any other popes had held would be seriously questioned.

Alexander V elected Pope, Oct. 1, 1409.

In the place of the deposed popes the cardinals at Pisa elected Peter Philargi, Archbishop of Milan, a Franciscan friar of blameless character, a student of the Universities of Paris and Oxford. After a reign of ten months Alexander died in Bologna. Twenty-four cardinals, by their unanimous suffrages, elected Baldassare Cossa, who took the name of John XXIII.

Pope John XXIII.

Pope John XXIII, though a man of undoubted talents, is one of the scandals of Church history, and it is a testimony to the way in which civilization has advanced, that such a promotion is impossible now. Baldassare Cossa was a Neapolitan, born in 1366, and had been a fighter practically all his life. In the Neapolitan wars he had taken part as a sailor, or rather as a pirate, for the crews fought for their own profit, and were not lawfully commissioned. Two of his brothers had been caught and hanged for piracy by King Ladislaus of Naples. Baldassare exchanged the life on board ship for the clerical vocation, though it is said he never lost the habit he had learned as a pirate of sleeping through the day and being about at night. Pope Boniface IX advanced him to be a chamberlain at the papal court, and found his diplomatic and businesslike qualities of the greatest use. The Chamberlain Cossa was unrivalled

at extracting money for the Pope from promoted clergymen. The immense increase in the sale of indulgences which took place at this time is said to have been due to him. He was further promoted to be Cardinal, and Legate of Bologna, which was part of the temporal State of the Church. The Bolognese were always very refractory and even rebellious subjects of the Pope, but the Legate Cossa reduced them to order by a kind of reign of terror. For his private character he was much condemned, and even in an age when the morals of men with regard to women were bad, Cossa is noticed for his remarkable licentiousness. His election to be pope is so extraordinary, even for that extraordinary time, that he is suspected of having purchased the votes of the cardinals. Another reason may be that the cardinals, anxious to end the Schism at all costs, put their strongest man into the papal chair, a man whose eminent diplomatic talents and experience in statesmanship should enable him to solve the complicated questions which were involved in the situation of the Church at that time.

Three popes.

The Council of Pisa had not ended the Schism; it had only left three popes where formerly there were two. For both Gregory and Benedict, though declared to be deposed, had abandoned nothing of their pretensions. But now the temporal arm was directed to the work in which the churchmen by themselves had failed. The Emperor Sigismund took the matter in hand: and the Empire, when the Middle Ages were dying, was shown forth for the first and last time in the position which it had always claimed, as the arbiter of Christendom, and the strong right arm of the Church. The nemesis of the Papacy had arrived; and that power which had broken the Empire in the thirteenth century, now broken itself, was, by the Empire, taken up and restored.

The Empire intervenes.

Pope John had not fared well since his election. King Ladislaus of Naples had invaded the State of the Church, and John fleeing from Rome (June 1413) had been glad to enter into friendly relations with Sigismund, to win his protection. The Emperor demanded that another General Council should be summoned, and the Free Imperial City of Constance was chosen for its meeting-place.

A General Council summoned at Constance.

1414.

During October 1414 the members of the Council were arriving. The beautiful little city, by the Rhine and Lake Constance, had never before witnessed anything like this wondrous assembly. Pope John himself opened the Council on November 5; but it was not till Christmas that anything like the full numbers arrived. On Christmas Eve Sigismund, with a magnificent retinue, came sailing across the Lake Constance, and at two hours after midnight landed at the imperial city. On Christmas Day in the cathedral, where Pope John preached the sermon in front of townspeople, nobles, doctors and prelates, Sigismund, being as emperor in deacon's orders, read from the Gospel, 'There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus'.

The Council.

The three objects for which the Council was summoned were—to end the Schism in the Papacy, to reform the discipline of the Church, and to extinguish heresy. Probably in all the long history of the Church there has never been a stronger body assembled for the objects it had in view. Not merely were the prelates and abbots of Europe present in large numbers, but the learned doctors of the time were particularly distinguished, especially the great theologians of Paris University, Pierre d'Ailly and Jean Gerson, the Chancellor. Italian learning was represented by Cardinal Zabarella and by the secretary of the papal curia. Poggio, a layman, the most eminent student of classical manuscripts that the Middle Ages produced.

By the end of the year the Council was practically complete, although its number was never constant. There were present, at various sessions of the Council, four patriarchs, twenty-nine cardinals, thirty-three archbishops, one hundred and fifty bishops, one hundred and thirty-four abbots, two hundred and fifty doctors. Eight English bishops at different times were present, of whom the best known are Robert Hallam, Bishop of Salisbury, and Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester. Besides, there were the Emperor, and several high German princes, and deputies from all the Free Cities. It is calculated that in and around the quaint old city, which ordinarily contained about seven thousand souls, there were, including servants and attendants, as many as 100,000 people at times residing.[1] The Imperial Government attended to the organization: the markets were kept well stocked, and prices remained moderate.

Council arranged in 'Nations'.

Italy has always had more prelates than any other country, and as Constance was an accessible place from Italy, even in those days of bad travelling, the Italians could almost by themselves have commanded a majority. Through the influence of the university members, however, the Council was arranged in four 'nations'—Italians, French, Germans (including Swedes, Danes, Poles), and English. The Spaniards came later and formed a fifth nation. As the Council voted by nations the numerical preponderance of the Italians made no difference.

John Huss.

The extirpation of heresy was first taken in hand. The great Bohemian reformer, John Huss, was born in or about the year 1373, of a prosperous peasant family in the Böhmerwald. He received a good education, and eventually proceeded to the University of Prague, where he passed through the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, of

[1] Milman, viii. 252.

Theology, and finally Master of Arts in 1396. He was, of course, by this time in Holy Orders. For the next ten years John Huss was one of the most honoured teachers in the distinguished university, and one of the greatest preachers in Prague. He was twice Rector of the University, in 1402 and 1409; and the chapel in Prague, the Bethlehem, in which he had preached since 1402, was thronged with the citizens who idolized him. Gradually he came to be a critic of the contemporary Church, and incurred suspicion among the high ecclesiastical authorities for his earnest study of Wycliffe's writings. Yet nothing really heretical was ever proved against him. He maintained that to sell indulgences was nothing more nor less than simony, and that Christ was the real head of the Church rather than Peter. The prelates and learned doctors of the Church ought to have agreed to this last proposition, as they themselves acted upon it, when in General Council they took upon themselves to make and unmake popes, the representatives of St. Peter.

Huss summoned to appear before the Council, 1415.

Huss was summoned to appear at the Council of Constance, and arrived there on November 3, after carefully having put in order all his private affairs in Bohemia, with a presentiment that he would not return. A few days afterwards he received the famous safe-conduct which the Emperor Sigismund had promised to send him. He was kept for months in confinement, till on May 4, 1415, his examination before the Council began in the Franciscan convent of Constance. He defended himself against the charge of heresy, and affirmed his belief in transubstantiation at the Holy Communion; but when solemnly required to admit that he had erred, according to every one of the articles with which he had been charged, he refused. He was there-

His trial.

fore adjudged guilty of heresy, and on July 6, in the presence of Sigismund,[1] was burned in the cathedral square. The death of this noble man caused a national war in his native country of Bohemia; the torch which had been lighted at his pyre was never extinguished. Next year, May 30, 1416, his friend and fellow reformer, Jerome of Prague, was likewise burned at Constance. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, afterwards Pope Pius II, says in his *History of Bohemia*: 'Both met their death with a constant mind, and hastened to the fire as if invited to a feast, uttering no sound that could indicate their agony. When they began to burn, they sang a hymn, which the flame and the crackling of the fire could scarcely prevent.'[2] His death.

Heresy was a subject on which almost the whole Council might be united, but the question of the Papacy was more difficult. Pope John XXIII was a diplomatist, and if skill could maintain him in his high position he was safe. The whole Council knew John's character, and that he was no fit man to rule the Church. From all sides there was persuasion put upon him to resign. The Cardinal Bishop of Cambrai, Pierre d'Ailly, even declared that 'the Universal Church, represented by a General Council, has full power to depose even a lawful pontiff of blameless character, if it be necessary for the welfare of the Church'. At last, on March 1, 1416, Pope John read to the whole assembly his act of resigna-

[1] Sigismund had sent Huss a safe-conduct, but it only protected Huss from ill treatment on the way to or from Constance, as a man coming on the Emperor's business. It did not protect him from proceedings before a lawful court, for offences for which he could lawfully be charged. Cp. Kitts, *Pope John the Twenty-third and Master John Huss* (1910), pp. 234–5.

The Emperor Charles V was faced with the same dilemma at the Diet of Worms in 1521, but he allowed Luther to depart free.

[2] Aeneae Sylvii *Opera*, *Historia Bohemica*, chap. xxxvi.

tion, 'when and so soon as Peter de Luna and Angelo Corario, called in their respective obediences Benedict XIII and Gregory XII, shall in like manner cede the Papacy'. John was probably not sincere. He meditated leaving Constance, and informed Sigismund of this intention. He was refused: the Pope was a prisoner! On March 20, however, during a splendid tournament held by the Duke of Austria, who was his friend and Sigismund's enemy, Pope John, dressed as a groom, and riding a poor horse, passed unsuspected through the gates of Constance. He found refuge at Schaffhausen, under the protection of the Duke of Austria, the lord of the castle of that city.

Pope John escapes. 1416.

Twelve Articles passed by the Council.

The Pope was gone, but the Council was not dissolved. Jean Gerson, the Chancellor of Paris, a man of the most powerful intellect, obtained the consent of the Council (except the cardinals) to twelve articles, which affirmed in the fullest degree the principle that the Church, or an Oecumenic Council representing the Church, was the guardian of religion, and could command the 'cession' of a pope or the termination of a schism. The Council, not the Pope, was the supreme representative of the Church.

1416. Pope John caught and tried.

On May 27 Pope John was taken and brought back, the Duke of Austria feeling no longer strong enough to protect him. He was tried before the whole Council. 'The most scandalous charges were suppressed; the vicar of Christ was only accused of piracy, murder, rape, sodomy, and incest; and after subscribing his own condemnation, he expiated in prison the imprudence of trusting his person to a free city beyond the Alps.' The most scandalous charge referred to was heresy, of which John was not accused before the Council. He was deposed from the Papacy, and kept in prison till the end

John deposed.

of the Council. Martin V, however, treated him kindly, and John ended his days peacefully in 1419 as a cardinal. The old Pope Gregory XII had already sent in his resignation, and died in 1417. Benedict XIII gave more trouble, and resisted even the persuasions of the Emperor Sigismund, who had travelled to Perpignan and met him on September 18, 1415. But though Benedict could not be persuaded, he could be ignored. He remained on his estate, the rock-fortress of Pensacola, till his death in 1424. He is still remembered in Great Britain as having given bulls confirming the charter of the University of St. Andrews in 1413.

Election of a new Pope.

The Council had now only to elect a pope, but even this task required much time and trouble. At last, on November 11, 1417, the Cardinal Colonna was elected by twenty-three cardinals and thirty delegates of the Council. An Italian, of the noblest family, of irreproachable character, and trained in all the business of the papal chancery, Martin V (such was the name he took) was an excellent choice. With him began the modern Papacy, Italian, statesmanlike, religious. The work of the Council was at an end. The voice of reform had been raised, but the energy of the fathers and doctors had been spent in ending the Schism. The Church, united under one efficient head, would, it was hoped, be able to purge itself of all abuses. The hope was not fulfilled.

Martin V

3. The Fringes of the Empire: Bohemia, Switzerland, the Hanseatic League, the Teutonic Knights, the Turks

Bohemia.

The Emperor Sigismund had, at the Council of Constance, raised the Empire to the height of its reputation. The rest of his reign was not to be so fortunate.

His brother Wenzel, King of Bohemia, died in 1419, but Sigismund was not to succeed peacefully to the kingdom. Already a terrible war had broken out. Before Wenzel died in 1419 the Bohemians had arisen to assert the religious liberty which they cherished from the example of John Huss. They refused to be bound by the decrees of the Council of Constance. More particularly they claimed the right to receive the cup as well as the wafer at the Holy Communion: since the twelfth century the Church had observed the rule that the cup should not be given to the laity, lest some of the wine, which was the very blood of Christ, should be spilled. The Bohemians felt that the principles for which Huss had stood were part of their national life. Already, in 1409, they had quarrelled with the other 'nations' at Prague University, who had thereupon left and founded a new University at Leipsic. A leader was soon found in Bohemia, John of Trocznow, a man of great military talents and courage, who had fought along with the Teutonic knights against the Prussians and Lithuanians. On April 19, 1419, a disturbance arose in Prague when John of Trocznow or Ziska, as he was known among the people, was going in a procession to receive the sacrament at St. Stephen's Church. Wenzel died of apoplexy brought on by anger at Ziska's independent proceedings. Sigismund was the heir to the Bohemian crown, but the Czechs were determined not to submit to the man who had suffered Huss to be burned, unless he would permit them the freedom of their religious worship. The next ten years were years of war in Bohemia.

John of Trocznow.

Ziska proved himself to be a skilful leader. Besieged by the royalist forces (that is, the forces of Sigismund) in Pilsen, he withdrew with the Hussites to Mount Tabor, a high place in the district of Bechin, which he fortified

Sigismund at war with Trocznow or Ziska.

so skilfully that he is claimed to have been the originator of the modern methods of fortification.[1] The war, like all mediaeval wars, was desultory and intermittent. Although it lasted for over ten years, it appears to contain only three first-class campaigns. The whole Bohemian nation had its heart in the struggle; the bulk of the Hussite forces consisted of townspeople and peasants; their favourite weapon was the deadly scythe or flail. At Deutschbrod in Moravia, in 1422, the chivalry of Hungary went down before the valour of the Bohemian nation. The city of Prague itself was in the hands of the national party, although the castle was held by Sigismund. Ziska had fortified the hill outside the city (since called the Ziskaberg, well known in Frederick the Great's wars) so that it was impregnable. Although blind, from old wounds received, as it seems, in the wars in Prussia, he knew the country perfectly, and always accompanied the Bohemian forces in a carriage, and directed their operations. Under his direction they would arrange their heavy rolling wagons into a ring or square, and oppose this barrier to the cavalry of the Hungarians and Germans. The impassioned peasantry fought with an extraordinary vigour; through long experience in war they became wonderfully strong and skilful, being able to give as many as twenty to thirty strokes with their flail in one minute. As in all wars between religions and races feelings became terribly embittered; the Hussites branded their prisoners with a cross on the forehead, the imperialists with a cup. Crusades were preached throughout Western Europe, and from England Bishop Henry of Winchester came to take part in the Holy War.

Battle of Deutschbrod.

[1] Coxe, *House of Austria* (1820), i. 218, quoting Pelzel.

The moderates and extremists fight each other in Bohemia.

But in 1424 Ziska died. Already, before his death, civil war had broken out in Bohemia, between the moderate party, who merely wished to secure to themselves the use of the cup in the Holy Communion, and the more extreme party, headed by Ziska himself, who wished to do away with the whole papal hierarchy. The moderates and extremists fought against each other, as well as against Sigismund and for the next six years there was a veritable reign of terror in Bohemia. Yet the princes of Germany and the cities could with difficulty be aroused to join to put an end to the fearful war. Saxony and the neighbouring regions were invaded by Hussite bands, and the country burned and ravaged. In 1431 a great effort was made by Sigismund, and, it is said, one hundred and thirty thousand men collected for an invasion of Bohemia. Ziska's successor, Procop Holy, had an army to meet them, and near Tauss, on August 14, 1431, the imperial army was put to flight. The common soldiers seem to have sympathized with the Bohemians, and even the German nobles were apathetic.

Sigismund defeated at Tauss by the Bohemians under Procop Holy.

Sigismund had offered political concessions to the Bohemians, but feelings had grown too embittered, and the national party had been too successful to make peace possible, had it not been for dissensions between the Bohemians themselves. In 1433 they were invited to send deputies to the Council of Bâle, which Pope Eugenius IV had summoned to settle the affairs of the Church. The extreme Hussites refused all concessions, but the moderate party were ready for terms. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, one of the most skilful statesmen of the period, a scholarly and moderate man, was sent to Prague as papal representative. He won over the moderate party, by his reasonable attitude, and though

The Pope intervenes.

the extremists held out and civil war for a time continued, moderation, as it was certain to do, eventually triumphed. The Pope granted concessions, which Sigismund guaranteed. In 1435 these concessions or 'compacts' were ratified in a Diet at Prague, at which Sigismund was acknowledged king. A general amnesty was proclaimed, and the Bohemians, alone of all Catholic peoples, were granted the right to have the wine as well as the wafer at the Communion. The Treaty of Iglau between Sigismund and the Bohemians in 1436 confirmed the arrangement. Until the days of Ferdinand II and the Thirty Years War the Calixtines or Utraquists, as the Bohemians were called, enjoyed religious liberty. Sigismund died at Gran, on December 9, 1437, leaving Bohemia in peace, and having secured the Empire for Albert V of Austria.

He grants concessions guaranteed by Sigismund.

The modern Federal State of Switzerland, with its noble traditions of freedom and independence, has grown out of the union some six hundred years ago, of the three Forest Cantons of Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden. The Habsburg family had certain estates in these districts and claimed to be the lords of the land, but the Emperor Henry VII had conferred on them the freedom of the Empire, that is, had made their allegiance depend directly upon the Empire, so that they were in the same position as any other state or prince in Germany. For the Swiss the Habsburgs represented the feudal principle, and therefore the men of the Cantons, after the death of Henry VII of Luxemburg, supported any claimant to the Empire rather than a Habsburg. They supported Louis of Bavaria (who was elected emperor on October 20, 1314) against Frederick of Austria, and accordingly, in 1315, they suffered an invasion by Frederick's energetic brother Leopold, a young man twenty-three years old, small

Switzerland.

Three Cantons granted the freedom of the Empire.

Invaded by Leopold of Austria.

in stature, but brave as a lion and a skilful leader in war:

Maior in exiguo regnabat corpore virtus.

'In his puny body a greater courage reigned.'

Into Schwyz from the north there is only one pass suitable for cavalry. Cavalry formed a great part of Leopold's force which was said to be 5,000 men, but was probably considerably less. Through this pass of Morgarten, about three miles long, with heights on one side, Lake Aegeri on the other, the Habsburg army was moving at dawn on November 15, 1315. The men of the three cantons, to the number of 1,400 only, occupied the heights along the pass. When the invaders were all within the pass, stones were rolled down into the compact columns of knights and footmen. In the confusion which ensued the confederates rushed down, armed with club, halberd, and pike, and slaughtered the heavily armoured soldiers, who seemed almost helpless in the narrow defile. Fifteen hundred of the Austrian force were killed, the rest dispersed and fled.

Battle in Pass of Morgarten.

The battle of Morgarten marks the foundation of independent Switzerland. As early indeed as 1291 the Forest Cantons had made a league for mutual defence, but their position, both with regard to the Habsburgs and to the Monasteries to which they paid tribute, was ill defined. In 1315, after the battle of Morgarten, they entered into an eternal league with each other. Leopold of Austria attempted within the next three years to subdue them, but after failing in 1318 to reduce the small town of Soleure, he gave up the attempt and made an armistice with the Confederacy. He died in 1326, aged thirty-five years.

League of the Forest Cantons.

The example of the Three Cantons inspired others, and in 1332 Lucerne joined them. This gave the Confederacy

The League joined by Lucerne.

the addition of a Canton with more of the civilian or municipal element than was possessed by the three rural republics. Lucerne was an important though small city (it might have four to five thousand inhabitants), and had a thriving trade with Italy. The Confederacy now consisted of the Four Cantons; they were politically 'free of the Empire', but strictly observed all the rights of private property which the Habsburgs and other great families possessed.

Zurich joins the League.

In 1351 the bounds of the Confederacy were extended from the Cantons around Lake Lucerne to the Canton of Zurich. Zurich had been made a Free Imperial City by Adolphus of Nassau, but its government was chiefly managed by the rural nobles, who favoured the lordship of the Habsburgs. As a result of a struggle between the democratic party and the nobles these were exiled and their estates confiscated. They attempted a counter-revolution with the aid of the Habsburgs, but unsuccessfully; and on May 1, 1351, Zurich joined the Four Cantons. The same year brought another addition: to the pastoral free peasantry of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden, to the burghers of Lucerne and Zurich, were now added the husbandmen of the thriving valley of Glarus. They responded to the call of Zurich and the others, and in 1352 were formally admitted to the Confederacy; Zug and Berne joined within the next year. Six years' desultory warfare brought no success to the Habsburgs, who in 1358 had perforce to make peace.

Glarus also joins.

Zug and Berne are admitted to the Confederacy.

These Cantons were now left in comparative peace for nearly thirty years. In 1375, Enguerrand de Coucy, a French son-in-law of Edward III, led an army of Free Companies into Alsace and Switzerland, claiming certain Austrian inheritances; but his forces were scattered in detail, as they entered different valleys, by the men of

Berne and the Forest Cantons. With regard to the Habsburgs trouble again arose over tolls, by which the family especially hampered the trade of Lucerne. Leopold III of Austria, who had been successful in extending his family's dominions in the south-east towards Italy, marched against the city of Zurich, which strongly defended the rights of Swiss cities. The men of the other Cantons marched to its support, and posted themselves in the woods, near the village or small town of Sempach (a Habsburg possession) above the Lake of Zurich.

Zurich attacked by Austria.

Battle of Sempach.

The battle took place on July 9, 1386, in an extent of sloping meadow land, intersected by hedges which prevented the Habsburg knights from using their horses. Accordingly the knights and men-at-arms dismounted, and formed a solid phalanx with lances projecting. The number of the invaders was about 5,000. The Swiss, numbering about 1,300, rushed down in wedge formation, armed with two-handed swords, battle-axes, and even with halberds which had been used at Morgarten. But the Habsburg phalanx proved impenetrable until Arnold von Winkelried, a knight of Unterwalden, gathered to his breast a number of the opposing lance-points and so opened a way. He himself was impaled on the points. The Swiss thus made their way into the enemy's ranks. About 2,000 of the invaders fell, including their leader, Leopold III of Austria, who refused to save himself by flight.

The battle of Sempach confirmed the independence of the Confederation, although the Habsburgs by no means abandoned the struggle at once. It is said that within six days after the battle declarations of war against the Confederacy were sent by fifty different German princes.

Battle of Näfels.

In 1388 the men of Glarus had to meet another invasion on a smaller scale, which they crushed in the pass at

Näfels, on April 9. Henceforward the history of the Confederation is rather one of expansion and of development than of self-defence. Peace was arranged in 1389 with the Habsburg family, and renewed for periods from time to time, the longest being fifty years from 1424.[1]

In the fifteenth century the Cantons which contained important cities, like Lucerne, Zurich, Berne, made great progress, comparable in many respects to that of the great Italian communes. First of all the burghers, in the course of disputes with the nobles of the surrounding district, either expelled these or forced them to become burghers. The estates thus rendered vacant were possessed by the leading families of the towns, the 'patricians' of Berne for example, who became well-to-do landowners, living upon the rents of their estates. They themselves lived on in the towns, where they built handsome houses, substantial ornamented buildings of timber and stone, which compared not unfavourably even with the palaces of the wealthy and noble burghers of Genoa. Their estates in the country-side were managed by bailiffs, who remitted the rents to their masters in the towns. The tenants were well treated, and in the towns the patricians preserved a certain simplicity of life, and contrived always to live on good terms with the bulk of their poorer fellow-citizens. The system of government was oligarchic rather than democratic, and the class of patrician families, who still form an ancient nobility within democratic Switzerland, was very close. Under them the Swiss formed alliances with the great towns of South Germany—with Strasburg, for instance, and Mühlhausen; while, on the other side, their political activities extended into the north of Italy, and westwards, towards Geneva. The political

[1] By the 'Everlasting Compact' of 1474 the Habsburgs renounced their rights and privileges within the Confederation.

system thus set up after the battle of Sempach lasted on till the conquest of Switzerland by the forces of the French Republic in 1798.

The Hanseatic League.

While to the south of Germany the league of the Swiss cantons was defending its independence in the north and north-east, another league was extending its influence through the beneficent means of commerce. In the early Middle Ages, when large states were few and were not highly organized, the foreign affairs of each state were simply wars and marriage alliances. Merchants trading to foreign ports had to look after themselves, with practically no help from their governments. They therefore early began to organize themselves in companies, societies, and gilds, for purposes of foreign trade, just as for internal trade merchant-gilds had been early established.

Gilds of Merchants for Foreign Trade.

The German gilds were probably the earliest which were started for trading outside their own country. By the middle of the thirteenth century there was a gild of North German merchants settled in London, with their 'factory' at the Steelyard. At the town of Wisby, on the Swedish island of Gothland, another German gild had acquired trading privileges, and from there extended its operations into Russia, to the town of Nijni Novgorod, the place of a great annual fair, and an important point on the great trade-route between the Black Sea and the Baltic. In the Low Countries again another trading corporation was to be found at Bruges, where the men of Lubeck and Hamburg had united to obtain trading privileges from the city. Out of these and other associations grew the famous Hanseatic League.

Peculiarities of the Hanseatic League.

The great point in which the Hanseatic League differs from all other mediaeval trade-gilds is that it combined both private organization and political government. The ordinary mediaeval trade-gild was a private corporation,

holding a charter from the King or Prince of the country to which it belonged. The Hanseatic League, on the other hand, was an association of the men of various cities, or rather of the cities themselves, and these formed a united government for the sole purpose of protecting, developing and regulating their foreign trade. The League had a common Diet or assembly, which met every three years at Lubeck; all the towns which were members sent representatives to the Diet. A common tax could be levied in all the leagued cities, and with this a common military force could be raised for any necessary expedition. Disputes between members of the League were settled according to a code of law which the League had adopted for general use, the 'Law of Lubeck'.

It is difficult to fix any particular date for the creation of this political mercantile league out of the more elementary unions which preceded it. In 1241 a step towards an inter-municipal or rather inter-state league, as distinct from a union of private merchants, was taken by Lubeck, a Free Imperial City, and by Hamburg,[1] when they joined together to control the trade-route between them through Holstein. But although united for this purpose, Hamburg and Lubeck were in different mercantile unions for trading elsewhere. Lubeck headed a league of Wendish towns, such as Wiswar, Rostock, Stralsund, Greifswald. Hamburg, Danzig, Cologne, Dortmund, Münster were in another. Riga, Reval, Dorpat (cities colonized from Germany) formed a third; while Brunswick, Magdeburg, Goslar, Hannover, Göttingen, and others formed a fourth. These are called respectively the Wendish, the Westphalian-Prussian, the Gothland, and the Saxon Leagues. But in 1367 these leagues joined together, by what is known as the 'Cologne

The First Trading Unions.

[1] Hamburg did not become a Free Imperial City till 1510.

Confederation', and formed the League of the Hansa, a term which appears also in early mediaeval England, and simply means gild or association.

Services rendered by the Hanseatic League.

The services of the Hanseatic League to its members and to mediaeval trade were of incalculable value. It was able to negotiate for trading rights with jealous foreign governments, to represent its members in foreign law courts, to protect them and vindicate their rights by force when necessary, and to maintain some sort of uniformity of weights, measures, and coinage between its component cities. This last was a very great benefit, as variations of measures and fluctuating values of coins were the bane of mediaeval trade everywhere.

War of the Hansa towns against Denmark.

Even before the Cologne Confederation of 1367 a large number of the Hansa towns had acted together in a common war against Waldemar IV, King of Denmark, who in 1361 conquered the Swedish island of Gothland, and destroyed the staple where 1,300 German merchants traded, many of whom lost their lives. Lubeck, at the head of the Wendish group of cities, at once took upon itself to protect the rights of German merchants, and under the energetic John Wittenberg, burgomaster of Lubeck, they carried the war into the heart of the Danish kingdom and besieged Copenhagen. The Swedes, however, left the Hanseatic side, and Wittenberg's fleet was destroyed and himself killed. This disaster, which threatened to put all the Baltic trade under the power of the Danish king, roused the North German cities, and made a real union among them. Even inland cities such as Breslau and Cracow joined; a powerful fleet was collected; Copenhagen was besieged and captured. In 1370 peace was made with Denmark on terms which secured to the Hanseatic cities freedom of trade in the Baltic and in Scandinavian ports.

Trade with the East.

For the next hundred years the Hanseatic merchants were the most energetic and successful traders in the north of Europe. In the great annual fairs at Danzig, Leipsic, Novgorod, and elsewhere they exchanged the goods of England, the Netherlands and Germany against the wares that came from the East by way of the Black Sea to Novgorod, by the Alps, Danube, and Rhine, to the North German staples or markets. The beautiful, richly covered town halls, the merchants' private houses, the Gothic churches of Bremen or Lubeck, or the substantial architecture of even inland Saxon cities, like Hildesheim and Magdeburg, bear witness to the greatness of this trade. But the end of the fifteenth century saw the end of the greatness of the Hanseatic League. The men of the Low Countries were ceasing to be merely manufacturers, and were taking to foreign trade, especially in the Baltic. Though strongly opposed to such competition the Hanseatic League had to allow it, after a contest which was concluded in 1441. The English too, through the company of Merchant Adventurers which began in Henry IV's reign, had entered the Baltic and traded with English cloth. The advance of the Turks up the Danube valley, and the growth of their sea-power in the Mediterranean, disturbed the trade from Asia and the East, for which the Hanseatic merchants were the intermediaries in the north of Europe. Finally, the discovery of the Cape route from India in 1498 diverted the eastern trade almost completely from coming overland through Germany, and made the Spanish, the Portuguese, the English, and finally the Dutch, who sailed on the great oceans, the heirs of the Hanseatic merchants, whose ships kept to the enclosed sea of the Baltic, to the North Sea, or the English Channel. When in the sixteenth century the

Causes of decay of the Hanseatic League.

herrings took to the shores of Britain and the Netherlands, rather than to North Germany and the Baltic, the last great resource of the Hansa merchants was gone. In political power too their loose confederation, though formidable in the Middle Ages, was at a disadvantage compared with the powerful, solid states that were rising towards the end of the fifteenth century, under popular autocratic monarchs, in France, Spain, England. The new monarchies of Europe were more powerful diplomatists than the merchants and officials of the Hanseatic League. So in the seventeenth century the League became little more than a name and a memory. Cities dropped away from it, and in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it only comprehended Hamburg, Lubeck, and Bremen, and then it was a League without real existence. In 1863 the last piece of League property, the land on which their offices and warehouses had stood in Antwerp, was sold. The Hanseatic League had dwindled and disappeared.

The Teutonic Knights.

When, after the Crusade of the Emperor Frederick II in 1229, the Christian power in the Holy Land continued to diminish, without prospect of any change, Hermann of Salza, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order of Knights, which had been founded in 1198 after the pattern of the Templars and Hospitallers, transferred its activities from Syria to the untamed country to the east of Brandenburg (1228). Here, east of the river Oder, heathen tribes still lived, whose conquest and conversion were worthy work for a crusading order. Such work too was merely the natural continuation of the historic trend of the German people eastwards against the Slavonic peoples, who could only be prevented from overrunning and absorbing the Germans to the west of them by being themselves conquered by the Germans.

The success of the Teutonic Order was very great, as it fought not only through the forces of its own members but with the help of a continuous stream of adventurous knights, who came from France, England, or other countries to employ their swords for a time against the heathen, and then to return to their native land. It was from such a period of temporary crusading that the Captal de Buch returned to France, and helped to put down the Jacquerie in 1358; and the English Henry IV, while still only Earl of Derby, is said also to have gone to East Prussia and fought by the side of the Teutonic knights in 1391. Adventurous Strangers.

As a result of their constant efforts a new German state gradually grew up to the east of the Oder, and stretched up the coast of the Baltic as far as Reval, and it is from the Germans who came to settle under their protection there that some of the landed nobility of the Russian Baltic provinces are to-day descended. The part of the domain of the Teutonic knights which has remained permanently German, though with a considerable element of Slavonic blood from its original inhabitants, is the modern province of East Prussia. In 1309 Marienburg, named after the Virgin Mary, was founded and became the head-quarters of the Order, instead of Venice, where the head-quarters had been after the loss of Acre in 1291. Thus Marienburg formed the capital of the state, which the knights were carving out of Slavonia for themselves, and of which the Order became proprietor and feudal head. From Marienburg many other fortified posts were founded, the 'convents' of the knights, and the nucleus of the trading towns which soon began to grow up. Each convent contained from twelve to thirty knights, accompanied by their squires. The squires were either A new German state founded. 'Convents.

aspirants to the Order, or young men from Western Europe who came for a short period of service. With the knights the native Prussians whom they had conquered and left on the land were bound to serve, and later there were also foot-soldiers, who fought for the Order for hire.

The conquered Slavs.

The conquered Slavs, who remained under the government of the Order, were all converted, and remained as tenants on the Order's estates. The knights, though not in clerical orders, were vowed to poverty and to celibacy, and as landlords they exercised the mild sway which was characteristic in the Middle Ages of clerical and collegiate landlords. From the rest of Germany men of good family and men of the middle classes came and took up land on the invitation of the Order. Thus families of Prussian squires became settled on the land, and have proved themselves to be the most vigorous element in the modern state of Prussia. The cities founded under the Order were equally successful. Königsberg had been founded by the Order on the suggestion of King Ottokar of Bohemia in 1255, Danzig, Thorn, Elbing grew into prosperity under the knights' protection, and in the fourteenth century, the greatest period in the Order's history, about sixty towns in all were founded. The Order itself became a member of the Hanseatic League, and the towns on its domain were granted all the privileges of the Hansa. Within the state the knights levied no taxes, but kept up their splendid castles and fought their wars from the proceeds of the Order's estates and from the levy of customs dues. In the great decay of German manners which had taken place after the death of Frederick II the Teutonic knights became the last home of mediaeval German chivalry, where knightly virtues were still

Cities founded by the Order.

The last of German chivalry.

practised, and where nobles and warriors could live without degenerating into coarseness and cruelty. There seemed no limit to the possible extent of the Order's state. In 1237 another Order, which had been founded in 1201, the Knights of the Sword in Livonia, joined with the Teutonic Knights and added Livonia to their domain.

Limit of expansion of the Order.

By the end of the fourteenth century the Order had almost reached the limit of its expansion. The object of its existence was to convert the heathen, therefore so long as there were heathen to the east of the state there was room to expand. But the rise of a great Christian Slav state east of the Vistula, under the Lithuanian House of Jagello, set a bound to the Order's territorial expansion. Hitherto Poland had not threatened the Order, being a Christian state, well to the south-east, under Christian princes; but in 1386, after the death of Ladislaus the Great of Hungary, the Duke of Lithuania, Jagello, married Hedwig, the co-heiress of Ladislaus the Great. He became King of Poland, was converted, and thus formed one vast Slav and Christian power east of the Vistula. The history of the Order had made it the enemy of this extended Poland, and the struggle between them became racial instead of religious. The decisive battle was fought in 1410 at Grünwald or Tannenberg, as the Germans call it, near where, over five hundred years later, a German army under Hindenburg was to gain a remarkable victory over the invading Russians. The first battle of Tannenberg was a crushing defeat of the Teutonic knights at the hands of the Poles. In a storm of rain the knights stood and fought with all the bravery of their race, but at the end of the day their Grand Master and large numbers of their members had fallen. East Prussia was only saved from complete

Poland enemy of the Order.

Battle of Grünwald or Tannenberg, July 15, 1410.

conquest by the energy and determination of Henry of Plauen, the heroic defender of Marienburg.

The *raison d'être* of the Order gone.

An Order such as that of the Teutonic Knights could only remain strong and true to its ideal while it could work for the object of its existence, namely, the conversion and conquest of the heathen. With the union of Lithuania and Poland under the Christian Jagellonic family the Order became an anachronism. The armoured knights, fighting under the banner of the cross in wind and rain at Tannenberg, were by that time no real crusaders, but merely the representatives of the Germanic type of civilization as against their Slavonic neighbours. The battle of Tannenberg marks a definite reaction against the spread of German influence, a reaction which was continued by the Hussite rising in Bohemia, a national Czech movement against Teutonic influence in that country. Since then the struggle has never ended; sometimes silent and hidden, sometimes open and violent, the pressure between the mystical Slav and the romantic German has never ceased, and none can see how it will end.

Reaction against the spread of German influence.

By the year 1466 (the Peace of Thorn) Poland had acquired West Prussia, except the city of Danzig, which remained a Free City of the Empire. Königsberg, in East Prussia, with its stately castle (in our own days restored by the Emperor William II), was the capital of the Order (from 1457), which also still possessed Livonia. But in 1526 the Grand Master Albert, of the Brandenburg-Anspach branch of the Hohenzollern house, adopted the reformed religion, and became hereditary Duke of East Prussia in feudal allegiance to the King of Poland. In 1618 the Duchy, through the extinction of Albert's family, went by inheritance to the branch of the Hohenzollern house which reigned at Berlin. Livonia remained under the Order till 1558, when it was divided by Russia and

Königsberg.

Livonia.

Poland, the Grand Master of Livonia becoming three years later Duke of the last portion of the knights' territory, Courland. The Order thenceforth lived on in Germany as a wealthy corporation, hoping to regain possession of East Prussia by legal process from the House of Hohenzollern. In 1809, almost five hundred years after the painful end of the Order of the Templars, eleven years after the Knights of St. John had lost their last possession, Malta, the Order of the Teutonic Knights was peacefully dissolved.

Dissolution of the Order.

Note on the Commercial Law of the Hanseatic League (see p. 191). The Hanseatic League was not the pioneer of inter-State commercial law. This really began for Western and Northern Europe with the Laws of Oléron, a small island off the mouth of the Gironde. All through the twelfth century there was a brisk trade between Bordeaux and the Dutch ports. In this traffic the traders of the Gironde observed customary laws which were codified about the year 1190 by some unknown hand into the 'Laws of Oléron'. Richard I of England, who was Duke of Guienne, adopted the Laws for the sea-going ships of England. The code was to a great extent adopted by the Dutch traders, and from them passed to the Baltic, where it influenced the commercial law not merely of the Hanseatic League but also of the Swedes. See P. Studer, *The Oak Book of Southampton*, vol. ii, pp. xxxvii–xli. A text and transl. of the Laws are given in the same work, vol. ii, chap. ix.

CHAPTER IX

ITALY

From the Death of Henry of Luxemburg

Naples.

The political forces which exercised a strong influence upon Italy in the fourteenth century were the kingdom of Naples, the Papacy, the Empire, and the tyrants. Naples under the House of Anjou remained separate from Sicily under the cadet House of Aragon, but it nevertheless formed a large and wealthy state, and under King Robert, who reigned from 1309 till 1343, attained to a European position. Robert was certainly one of the most capable princes of the time. Naturally averse to the re-establishment of the imperial power in Italy, which would certainly have limited the influence of his own state, Robert supported the Papacy and the Guelfs everywhere. The free cities accepted his protection for a time; in 1313 he was made Signor of Florence, in 1318 Signor of Genoa. He was also Count of Provence. Under him Naples was wealthy and prosperous. As in the time of Frederick II or Charles of Anjou, it had commercial and political connexions with the North African states, such as Egypt. Robert, however, died in 1343, and for seventy years Naples suffered from intermittent civil wars between rival members of his family, and never again did the kingdom have predominant power in Italy, although under Ladislaus, who reigned from 1386 to 1414, its influence was strongly felt. But the population of Naples was indolent and incapable of continuous effort and discipline. Only under

rulers of foreign extraction did it show any energy, and in time the families of these rulers themselves succumbed to the enervating influences of the society and climate of the kingdom.

The idea of the Empire still had an influence in Italy, and there was always a chance that if an energetic and capable emperor came to represent it there he might still make the imperial theory a real thing. From time to time attempts were made to do so. In 1327 Louis the Bavarian came by the well-worn imperial route from Trent, and for a time succeeded in reducing the power of the Visconti family in Lombardy, made an alliance with the tyrant Castruccio Castrucani in Lucca, and was ultimately crowned in Rome. In 1331 the romantic King John of Bohemia came to uphold the imperial interests (he was then still friendly with the Emperor Louis) along with his son who subsequently became the Emperor Charles IV. Charles took over the government of Lucca for a short period, and proved himself to be a successful and humane magistrate. In 1354 and again in 1368 Charles IV came to Italy. On the first occasion he received the imperial crown of Rome, but did nothing to make his power effective in Italy. The Visconti were completely masters of Milan by then; when Charles IV visited the city they were able to parade 6,000 horsemen and 10,000 foot in the streets before the Emperor, who probably had about a tenth of that number himself when he entered Italy. On the second occasion, in 1369, Charles came to aid the Pope and the lords of Padua, Ferrara, and Mantua against the all-absorbing Visconti; but the Englishman, Sir John Hawkwood, then in the service of Milan, defended the line of the river Adige and cut its dykes, so that the Emperor had to retire discomfited. This was the last

The tradition of the Empire in Italy.

serious attempt to assert the imperial power in Italy in the fourteenth century.

The Temporal State of the Church.

The Papacy was not much more successful in the long run in trying to maintain its temporal power. In general the free cities supported the claims of the Pope, as his rule, which in the Middle Ages was just a species of overlordship, touched them less closely than the presence of a local tyrant would have done. Thus Florence was practically always papal and Guelfic. For the same reason the Viscontis were Ghibeline, and were always opposed by the popes. In 1317 Pope John XXII excommunicated Matteo Visconti, and in 1320 Philip of Valois (afterwards Philip VI) came to Lombardy with 700 lances to raise the country against the tyrant of Milan, but accomplished nothing. In the middle of the century the Papacy commenced a great enterprise to rewin the Romagna, the towns of which had all come under one local despot or another. Giovanni Visconti, the Archbishop and despot of Milan, had even obtained control of the great city of Bologna. But when in 1353 Innocent VI sent the exceedingly capable Spaniard, Cardinal Albornoz, as his legate, the tide for a time turned. Florence supported the cardinal, and partly by arms, partly by excommunication and diplomacy, the Romagna was won back for the Papacy. Albornoz did not always re-establish popular governments under the Pope. In some cities he made terms with the little despots, and used them and their forces, which were very useful, as Romagna had the only warlike population left in Italy. But Albornoz died in 1368, and the papal state declined, lacking his strong hand. In 1369 Urban V sent two legates to excommunicate Bernabò Visconti at Milan. Bernabò took them to the bridge over the Naviglio, and invited them either to eat or drink. Pre-

ferring the land to the water the legates, it is said, were compelled to eat the bulls of excommunication which they had brought. Between 1360 and 1370 the Papacy, having taken Sir John Hawkwood into its service, again won back Romagna, though it quarrelled with its old ally Florence. After the return of the Papacy to Rome the power of the popes and of the tyrants in Italy remained in a sort of equilibrium, but it was not till the pontificate of Julius II that the State of the Church became at all solid and substantial. 1503–13.

The Despots.

The history of Italy in the later Middle Ages is the history of its tyrants. They are its characteristic feature, the representatives of its virtues and its vices. The cities of the flat fertile plain of Lombardy were rich and prosperous, and their interests were all bound up with the maintenance of peace and order, which were more often found under the centralized rule of a tyrant than under a democracy. Party strife was the bane of Italian politics, and the rise of the despots was acquiesced in by the populace of the cities as a relief from the strife of factions. The richness and the prosperity of the cities made them unwarlike, so that the wealthy family which could hire sufficient mercenaries was able, once it had risen to power, to maintain itself against any political party. Thus even Florence, the great Tuscan republic, at last came under a tyrant family, the Medici. Venice alone remained free, but only because the close aristocracy of families which ruled it, by elaborate precautions, carefully stifled at the outset all tendencies towards tyranny or democracy. The Italian despots were tyrants in the Greek sense of the word, personal rulers, ruling in their own interests rather than in the interests of the community, but resting nevertheless upon a certain amount of popular approval. From the nature of their position their own interests

were to a large extent the same as the interests of the community. Therefore the tyrants aimed at making their cities rich and beautiful, and in maintaining justice between man and man. The ruinous strife of Guelf and Ghibeline within a city could not be tolerated under a tyrant's rule. Nor would it have suited a tyrant, even if his government had been strong enough, to take away his citizens *en masse* to a war, for so he would have ruined the city merchants and artisans, and would have lost his taxes. Therefore the tyrants fought by means of mercenaries, men who were *condotti*, that is, hired by them, and who could be had at any time for pay.

Condottieri.

The *condottieri* are a prominent feature of Italian life in the later Middle Ages. They were a distinct class whose profession was fighting, who served a master according to the terms of their engagement with him, and when he no longer required their services passed into another place where employment could be found. A condottiere captain was a man who knew not merely how to command, but how to find men when wanted. Generally the common fighters attached themselves to a particular captain, who transacted for the whole company the business with the tyrant or state wishing to hire soldiers. The condottieri companies had a certain professional standard of honour, and were generally faithful to their employer during the period of their engagement with him; but the next time he was at war their services might have been engaged by the enemy state, and then they would be equally faithful in fighting against him. The wars thus waged were not sanguinary. Fighting was a regular profession, and a condottiere soldier reckoned that it would last him for a fair lifetime. The opposing bands in a war had no quarrel with each other, no national, racial or religious aversion. Their captains might be

well acquainted with each other, and inspired by no other contentious feeling than an honourable spirit of professional rivalry. Therefore they did not aim at winning campaigns by destroying the opposing forces, but only by outmanœuvring them, by getting possession of the critical place, by cutting them off from their supplies, by gaining a tactical victory which should make the other side see that the game was lost. When battles were fought only with trained professional companies, and when the number of such companies was limited, it was quite possible to win a war without shedding much blood: the capture of an opposing captain would destroy the efficiency of a whole company and so end the war. The captains developed a wonderful skill in this kind of warfare, and became admirable tacticians. For the Italians, as a whole, war became a kind of spectacle, which they had indeed to pay for, but not heavily.

Hawkwood.

The greatest of the condottieri was Sir John Hawkwood, an Englishman. It was Edward III who created the professional English soldier, as distinct from the freeman who came forward to serve for the purposes of national defence, or from the tenant who was merely fulfilling the terms of his feudal obligation. Hawkwood, the son of an Essex tanner, had left the career of a London apprentice for service in the French wars, and distinguished himself sufficiently to be knighted either by Edward III or by the Black Prince. After the Peace of Calais in 1360 put an end to employment under the English king, Hawkwood passed on with a body of soldiers who had got to know each other in the English wars, to Italy. Here, as captain of the White Company, he began a new and brilliant career that won for him the reputation of being one of the greatest strategists of the Middle Ages.

1362–3. Shortly after his arrival in Italy Hawkwood was engaged by the Marquis of Montferrat for service against
1364. Milan. In the next year he is found campaigning for the republic of Pisa against Florence; afterwards he
1368 was engaged by Bernabò Visconti, Lord of Milan; and
1373. subsequently by the papal legate, who was fighting the Visconti. It was during one of his periods of service under the Papal State, engaged upon rewinning Romagna, that Hawkwood's men were permitted, at the orders, it
1377. appears, of the papal legate, Cardinal Robert of Geneva, to sack the town of Cesena, the most bloody incident in those comparatively bloodless wars. From the papal service Hawkwood passed into that of Florence. In 1383 Edward III appointed him ambassador to represent English interests at the papal court. Two years before his death he successfully commanded the Florentine forces against the Visconti. He died in 1394, and was buried in the cathedral of Florence, or it may be his body was taken back to England by his son for burial in his native village of Hedington Sibil in Essex.

Hawkwood was a soldier who spent all his active life in camps, but he was by no means entirely hardened. He took part in the massacre of Cesena, according to the orders he had been given; but immediately afterwards he resigned the command of the White Company, and after that spent most of his time in the service of Florence. The Florentines greatly appreciated his services. In 1375 for a few months they had paid him a large sum, as a retaining fee, merely in order that he might not serve against them. The end of his life was passed in a villa in the beautiful country outside Florence, whose citizens accorded him a public funeral after his death. He was married to a daughter of Bernabò Visconti, and his children ranked among the nobles of Italy. Froissart

calls him 'a knight right hardy and of great experience, and well renowned in the marches of Italy'; but Hawkwood was more than a mediaeval knight. His campaign on the Adige in 1369 against Charles IV was a model of the new kind of warfare, the skilful defence of lines, the turning of positions, in place of the simple shock-tactics of the Middle Ages. There were great captains of condottieri after Hawkwood—Carmagnola, Coleoni—but none greater than he.

Milan. The history of Milan furnishes a good example of the rise of a tyrant family. Otto Visconti was Archbishop of Milan in the time of Pope Urban IV. His family were imperialist and the opponents of the della Torre, a noble family which supported the popular or Guelfic side. The struggle between the two factions was put to a decisive test at the battle of Desio in 1277, when the Visconti Archbishop scattered the Torriani faction. The hereditary cruelty of the Viscontis was seen in the way the vanquished were treated. The Archbishop kept five of the della Torre imprisoned in iron cages. He himself died in 1295, and left his nephew Matteo Visconti in the lordship of the city. In theory all the cities of Italy were merely self-governing communities under the supreme authority of the Emperor. In 1310 Henry VII conferred on Matteo Visconti the title of imperial vicar in Lombardy, so that he had now a certain legal position. Gradually the Visconti power extended outwards from Milan, and neighbouring tracts and cities were taken under their protection. This policy of extension brought them into collision with the State of the Church. Matteo was excommunicated by the Pope, and abdicated in 1322 in favour of his son Galeazzo I. It was the last time a Visconti took any account of a papal excommunication. Galeazzo I was followed by Azzo (1328–39), next

by Lucchino, and then by one of the greatest of all, Giovanni, Archbishop of Milan, who held the lordship from 1349 to 1354. Giovanni was both a strong and a cultivated man, the friend of Petrarch, and the conqueror of Bologna. The next lord, Galeazzo II, is noted for a royal marriage, marrying no less a lady than Violante, daughter of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, granddaughter of Edward III of England. After Galeazzo II came Bernabò, who made the papal legates eat their bulls in 1369, and in the same year defeated the forces of the Emperor Charles IV through the military abilities of Sir John Hawkwood. Bernabò's nephew was the greatest of all, Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Under his tyranny almost the whole of Lombardy was united, one republic after another coming into his hands, or being ruled for him through some client family. From his time the term Milanese means a large state or province of which Milan is only the capital. The wealth of Gian Galeazzo was enormous, and he took all the best generals of Italy into his pay. In 1395 he obtained from the Emperor Wenzel the title of Duke of Milan, and so became one of the sovereigns of Europe. It appeared as if at last a real kingdom of Italy might be founded under this talented and tenacious family. By the time he died Gian Galeazzo had extended his power into Tuscany and taken Siena; he was besieging Florence itself on September 3, 1402, when plague struck him down at the age of fifty-five. In Gian Galeazzo's two sons the degeneracy brought about by a hundred years of strain was seen. Gian Maria, the first son, was a youth in whom cruelty had become a passion. One of his great interests in life was a pack of hounds which he kept to set on the criminals of Milan. These dogs tore their victims to death and fed on their flesh. He was murdered

in 1412. The second son, Filippo Maria, was a physical degenerate, lean, ugly, with protruding eyeballs, but a master of the kind of statesmanship suited to his time and place. He chose his captains with unerring insight: Carmagnola, who had begun his career as a soldier of fortune at the age of twelve, Francesco Sforza, the illegitimate son of a condottiere who had served the King of Naples. Filippo Maria Visconti's power stretched right across North Italy, and the greatest cities, Genoa, Pavia, Brescia, as well as Milan, were in his hands. Only Venice and Florence could withstand him, till death cut him off in 1447. He was the last of the Visconti in the male line. Milan passed into the hands of the Sforza family, until the invasion of Charles VIII of France in 1494 brought it under foreign domination.

Influence of the Italian despots.

Cold, cunning, selfish, and cruel, the Visconti are typical Italian despots of the more sinister kind, just as the Medici of Florence, who rose as merchant-bankers, not as nobles, are despots, although equally worldly, of a milder sort. Undoubtedly Milan, like Florence, owes something to its tyrants, but not a great deal. Gian Galeazzo founded the elaborate Cathedral of Milan, a strange and wonderful building, with many points of beauty, although greatly criticized. The finer Certosa, or Carthusian house, of Pavia is due to him too, and the universities of North Italy, Pavia, Piacenza, and Milan itself, benefited from his patronage. The Visconti looked like becoming kings of Italy. Yet no ruling house is descended from any tyrant; no civic despot is represented in the history of to-day. It is from the feudal lords of the Piedmontese Alps that the rulers of Modern Italy have come.

Castruccio Castracani.

The Visconti were a great tyrant family, fortunate in a long succession of able sons. Other cities had their

despots too, less fortunate in founding a dynasty. Machiavelli has left a charming account of one of the smaller and earlier despots, who yet had the elements of greatness in him, and the virtues of an honest soldier without the duplicity of the later tyrants. This was Castruccio Castracani, who was born in 1284 and died in 1328. His origin is obscure, for he was found one morning in the orchard of a priest's house in Lucca, and brought up by the priest's sister. Castruccio was intended for the priesthood by his adopted parents, but so distinguished himself in all the games and exercises of the Lucchese children that a rich soldier of Lucca, Messer Francesco Guinigi, adopted him into his own family. Under the charge of Messer Francesco, Castruccio, who was noticed for his modest, courteous manners, made a campaign at the age of eighteen in the forces of the Visconti. Soon after, Francesco died and left Castruccio as guardian of his young son. Castruccio was faithful to the trust and kept the young Pagolo Guinigi by him, and on dying made Pagolo his heir. The lord of Lucca and Pisa at this time was a small despot, Uguccione Faggiuola, who possessed the city after having been elected Captain of the People. Castruccio won a victory for him over the Florentines. This so increased Castruccio's reputation that Uguccione threw him into prison; but the people of Lucca, to whom he was now a hero, effected the release of the young soldier. Castruccio drove away Uguccione, who died in exile among his friends the della Scala of Verona. Castruccio himself now became Lord of Lucca by the help of Pazzino del Poggio, of an old Lucchese family, and by election of the people. He then entered into league with the Visconti, and engaged in the war against the Florentines, against whom he could put in the field (it is said) 20,000 soldiers,

admirably disciplined, and taught to move even on the battle-field with all the precision of the later companies of condottieri. He was successful many times against Florence, and became lord of a large dominion, including Lucca, Pisa, and the Tuscan town of Pistoia. A conspiracy of the Poggio family against him occasioned a breach of faith on his part, the blot on a career which on the whole is high above the level of contemporary Italian manners. He seized the Poggio who came to him trusting to his word, and exiled the whole family. His power was known and respected throughout Italy. Henry VII of Luxemburg invited him to Rome, and had him made a senator. Castruccio's presence kept Rome quiet and orderly, and his care in bringing corn from Pisa by sea kept the Emperor's forces supplied and free from the necessity of living on the country or city. The Florentines naturally opposed the advance of Castruccio's power up the Arno; but he won two great victories in succession, one at Sarravalle, a castle between Pescia and Pistoia, and another on the Arno, near San 1328.
Miniato. He held castles on both sides of the Arno to within two miles of Florence. But the day of the battle below San Miniato brought death to Castruccio, when his power in Central Italy was almost supreme.

'This illustrious Hero, tired with the fatigues of a Battel, as painful as glorious; coming out of the Fight with his imagination full of great things that might follow, and running over in his mind the probability of his good fortune, believing no hopes were left for the enemies' loss nor no bounds for his victory, he marched directly for the Gate of Fucechio. It having been always his principle to be first on horseback, and last that came out of the field, he rested there some time, not out of ostentation, but to thank and caress the Souldiers as they returned from the pursuit, and withal to be ready, in case the enemy should rally. Whilst he was standing

there, covered with sweat, his heart panting, and out of breath, an unlucky cold wind came from the other side of the Arno, and with a pestiferous quality so affected his blood, that he fell immediately into the cold fit of an Ague: at first he neglected it, though he found a general alteration, as believing himself sufficiently hardened against the injuries of the air; but this negligence was very pernicious. The next night his Fitt increased, and his Fever was so violent, his Physitians gave him over.'[1]

Next day, June 11, 1328, before he died, he called Pagolo Guinigi, his ward, to him and said:

'Had I imagined (dear Son) that fortune would have stop'd my course in the midst of the way that conducted me to Glory, and so soon interrupted the felicity of my Arms, I would better have enjoyed the fruit of my pains. 'Tis possible I should not have left your Territory so large, but I should have endeavoured to have left it more quiet, by creating fewer enemies to myself, and less envy to you. I should have contented myself (dear Son) with the Sovereignty of Lucca and Pisa, and instead of intending the Conquest of Pistoya, and contracting the hatred of the Florentines by so many affronts, I should have endeavoured by all means possible to have gained their affection.'[2]

Yet Castruccio had been faithful to his trust.

'When he [your Father] came to die he committed to my care and faith both your person and interest; have I betraid his confidence in anything? can you complain that my generosity has not been answerable to his? my heart does not reproach me by any ingratitude. I have not only preserved to you the fortune of your Father; but to leave you the fruit of my labours and success I have declined all overtures of Marriage, lest hapning to have children of my own, my natural affection for them should have destroyed my friendship for you; and lessened the acknowledgment which I owed to his bounty.'[3]

[1] Machiavelli, *Castruccio Castracani*, Dacres's translation, 1640, p. 262. [2] Ibid., p. 262. [3] Ibid., p. 263.

He advised Pagolo to avoid an ambitious policy, and to conserve what he already had.

'But the worst of all is, the Florentines are your neighbours, and you know mortally offended, as having been worsted by me perpetually: but that is not sufficient to suppress them. They will be now overjoyed and insult more upon the news of my death than if they had conquered all Tuscany. As to the Succours you are to expect I will not dissemble with you: you can hope for none but from the Emperor, or Princes of Milan, and you will be deceived if you expect any from them; they are either too slow, or too busy, or too remote. Depend not therefore upon anything but your own Conduct, upon the memory of my Atchievements and the consternation which my Victory has brought upon our enemy. It will be no little advantage to you if you can allure the Florentines to an accomodation and their fear, without doubt sufficiently inclines them. Let your comportment with them for the future be different from mine; and as I have always provoked them, and believed nothing could so much contribute to my happiness, as to deal with them as enemies, let it be your care to desire their amity and found not your repose upon any thing so much as an alliance with them. Nothing in this life imports us so deep as the knowledg of our own tempers, and how to employ them; but this science belongs most properly to those who would govern; and it is necessary for such to spin out their lives in the luxuries of peace when they find themselves unfit for warlike executions: my advice therefore (dear Charge) is, that you would live in repose, and if you will make the advantage of the troubles of my life to sweeten your own, you will remember to follow it.'[1]

Castruccio left a good name behind him. Machiavelli says 'no prince of those times was ever so loved as he was'. Although above all things a soldier, there was no roughness about him. 'His aspect was charming, and

[1] Ibid., p. 264.

he had so much grace and goodness in his accost that never man went unsatisfied from his conversation.' He was above the ordinary height, perfectly proportioned, with reddish hair, which he wore contrary to the Italian fashion, cut short above the ears; 'wherever he went, snow, rain or hail, let the weather be what it would, his head was always uncovered'. His life was a life of action. God, he said, was a lover of strong men, because one always sees that the weak are chastised by the strong. His shrewd and pithy sayings lived after him. When a man boasted of the amount of strong drink he could take, Castruccio said 'a Quart pot does the same'. When a long-winded orator inquired if he had fatigued his hearer, Castruccio answered, 'No, indeed, I did not mind one word that you said'. 'One of his camerades asking him merrily what he should give him for a box at his ear, Castruccio answered immediately, a Helmet if you please.' When asked how he should be buried, he replied, 'With my face downward, for I am sure in a short time this Country will be turned topsie-turvy and then I shall be in the same posture with other men.' 'He dyed', says Machiavelli, 'in the 44th year of his age and in his good and his bad fortune he expressed always an equality and steadiness of spirit, and as he left several Monuments of his prosperity and good fortune behind him, so he was not ashamed to leave some memorials of his adversity,' for there was always kept hanging up in his palace the shackles which he had worn in Uguccione's prison. Machiavelli believed that Castruccio only lacked length of years and a grander stage, to play the rôle of Emperor.

'That which is still remarkable is, that having equalled the great actions of Scipio and Philip the Father of Alexander, he dyed as they did in the 44th year of his

Age, and doubtless he would have surpassed them both had he found as favourable dispositions at Lucca as one of them did at Macedon and the other in Rome.' [1]

Florence.

The great Republic of Florence remained free till the middle of the fifteenth century. In Florence the intellectual development of the period reached its highest point. Situated almost in the centre of Italy, in the beautiful valley of the Arno, it seemed to gather to itself the great qualities of the whole people, and the light that was being shed over the land from the East.

Such high development, literary and artistic, took place most easily in circumstances of wealth and freedom. Florence is an instance of a city, affluent and powerful in trade and commerce, although without close contact with the sea. Its population in the fourteenth century was probably about 100,000, while that of London was not more than 30,000. Its great cloth industry brought in more than a million florins a year, and out of the difficult transactions for paying for the wool from England and elsewhere there had grown up in Florence a system of merchant-banking, which was gradually displacing the papal agencies as means of remitting money, and which rivalled, and in places even superseded, the agencies of the Jews. The merchants of Florence acted as European bankers; they lent money to foreign governments, and through conducting such negotiations with these governments became themselves experienced diplomatists. Thus, like the Fuggers and the Rothschilds of a later day, they founded houses, dynasties one might almost call them, of a half-princely, half-financial kind. Their friendship was valued in every part of Europe, and the noblest ancient families were glad to take wives from among them.

[1] Machiavelli, op. cit., p. 272.

But more than wealth is necessary for a great artistic and literary development. The high-minded despots of Italian states might attract geniuses to their courts, as the della Scala brought Dante to Verona, the Sforza Leonardo da Vinci to Milan, and as the Este, in the sixteenth century, brought Tasso to Ferrara. But as a rule it was in free towns that the geniuses were actually produced, because among citizens accustomed to read, act, and govern for themselves, the general level of intelligence, and the general interest in intellectual things, was high enough to provide a field for the growth and training of a genius. Boccaccio, Michaelangelo, Leonardo were born within the limits of Florentine rule, and grew up in the city.[1]

The history of the city is by no means a peaceful one from the death of Henry of Luxemburg till the Medici set up their lordship. External war and internal sedition are the theme of every chronicle, almost from year to year. But the external wars were of a local nature; the Florentines made no distant expeditions, and they fought their battles mainly by means of condottieri captains. The internal seditions disturbed but did not destroy the life of the city. A sudden assembling of people outside the Cathedral, or down by the Arno: a shout of *Popolo! popolo!* the flight of one or two *grandi*, who went to live on their funds in another city—this was what a Florentine revolution generally amounted to. In about a year's time the exiled *grandi* would come back, and perhaps even find their house still standing, its solid walls and doors untouched.

Constitution of 1329.

In 1329 the Florentines, having escaped the danger

[1] Petrarch was born at Arezzo in Tuscany in 1304, fifty-four miles from Florence. Arezzo was not till later actually under the dominion of Florence.

that threatened them from Castruccio Castracani, took the opportunity to recast their constitution, so as to keep the city for the Guelfs. The government consisted of a *consiglio del popolo* of 300 members, a *consiglio del commune* of 250, half people, half noblemen, and the *priors* chosen by lot exclusively from the Guelf party out of a list nominated by a board. This system, however, did not give peace more than any other; there were still Ghibelines among the people, and disturbances frequently broke out.

The foreign policy, if one may so term it, the attitude of Florence towards the other states of Italy, was largely determined by the necessity of keeping open the trade-routes through Central Italy. The persistent attempt of the Florentines to acquire Lucca and Pisa is explained by this necessity. Her wars with the Visconti of Milan were partly due to this, partly to mere self-defence against that all-absorbing family. Before the end of the sixteenth century Florence attained the dimensions of a respectable state, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. But in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it was just a great city with external dependencies, subject republics which it ruled indeed, but which it did not admit to its own franchise. The citizens of Pistoia or San Geminiano were not citizens of Florence.

The Duke of Athens.

The tendency towards monarchy is seen all through Florentine history, for a democracy, it appears, has more affinity with that form of government than has an oligarchy of nobles, as Venice, for instance, was. In 1342 the Florentines invited Robert of Naples to send them a leader, and thus they came under the Lordship of Walter of Brienne, a member of a notable family of French adventurers who had become reigning princes in the later Crusades. Walter's father had been Duke of

Athens, but had lost the Duchy, and his son was now a soldier in the Neapolitan service. He had the title of Duke of Athens, and now looked like becoming in fact Duke of Florence, for after he arrived in the city the people elected him lord for life. He began well, by dealing out justice with a firm hand, but soon he gave his attention more particularly to getting money. It is said that by taxation he raised 400,000 florins in less than a year—the ordinary revenue of Florence for a whole year was only 300,000 raised by customs duties. His bodyguard of 800 Frenchmen appear to have been as dissolute and insolent as himself. But despotism in
1343. Florence was not to be founded this way. On July 26, 1343, there was a revolution, and Walter had to fly back to the kingdom of Naples. The day of his expulsion became a particular festival in Florence.

The Black Death. The tyrant duke had been got rid of, but the city was not freed from all its troubles. For one thing Edward III of England, who had borrowed largely from the great merchant-bankers, the Houses of Bardi and Peruzzi, repudiated his debts in 1345, and this dishonourable and cruel act caused distress in Florence, and damaged their business interests all over Europe. Then in 1348 came the Black Death, when, as Boccaccio, who returned to Florence shortly after the pestilence had left it, says, people died in the very streets day and night. 'Over a hundred thousand human beings', he says, 'perished within the walls of Florence, whereas before the plague people most likely did not even believe that it contained so many inhabitants altogether.' If indeed one half of the 100,000 inhabitants perished (as seems probable) the disaster must have been more terrible than we can comprehend. Boccaccio says that at the beginning of the pestilence 'persons were appointed to clear away all

filth out of the town, and no sick people were allowed to enter it'. But the accumulations of poisonous and infectious material must soon have outstripped the efforts of the improvised sanitary service. The houses of Florence, like those of other mediaeval towns, were high, the streets narrow. It is a wonder that the plague ever left such a city at all. The people became demoralized, the laws were neglected; even the nuns, says Boccaccio, had forgotten their vows, and were living without restraint. Nurses were not to be had; doctors were scarce, but did what they could. The physician in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* had been through the Black Death in England, and had amassed a fortune by his devotion.

External Wars.

When the plague was over (it never can be said to have come to a complete end in the Middle Ages) the city settled down again to its ordinary way of life, the people who had fled returned. The Parte Guelfa, the organized body of Guelfic citizens, ruled the city through their six captains, but it was more like a reign of terror than a government. Seditious people were condemned without being heard, provided that there were reputable witnesses against them. Party spite indulged in its favourite method of exile. Externally Florence was menaced by the Visconti, but was strong enough to remain independent through a league it formed with three other Tuscan republics which were similarly menaced, Arezzo, Siena, Perugia. In 1362 the old war with Pisa was revived, and went successfully enough for Florence till the Pisans engaged Sir John Hawkwood and the White Company. A war with the Visconti followed, and Hawkwood, who was again engaged by Florence's enemies, won a signal victory at Cascina in 1370. Peace was concluded the same year.

Five years later the great Guelf Republic, the ancient

friend and supporter of the Papacy, was involved in war against the legate of Gregory XI in Italy. The temporal power of the Church in Italy had become much stricter since its restoration by Cardinal Albornoz. The Florentines found that they themselves were menaced, and appointed a Committee, 'the Holy Eight of War', to maintain their independence. There was, almost simultaneously, a rising throughout the Papal State, in 1375, and Florence joined the revolted communes. The city was excommunicated, but remained steadfast till the efforts of St. Catherine of Siena and the death of Gregory XI brought about a cessation of arms.

1378.

The Ciompi.

The control of Florence was passing out of the hands of the noble families and the more ancient of the wealthy burgher houses to that of newer wealthy merchant families, the Albizzi, Strozzi, and Medici. The *Signori*, or executive government of the city, consisted of the Priors of the six greater Arts, the important trade-gilds. The fourteen lesser Arts, of men who were merely retailers and shopkeepers of various kinds, had but little power; while the day-labourers, like the men who beat the wool with sticks and clubs, had none at all. They had their own associations however, and from this were known as *Ciompi* or 'mates'. In July 1378 the Ciompi rose and seized the government, by a bloodless revolution, possible only in a free republic where there were no regular police and no army. The position of Gonfaloniere was then held by two members of the Ciompi in succession, without making much difference. In 1384 a *balia* or committee of the people to remodel the Constitution was formed, and the old condition, which was found on the whole to be the most stable, of government by the well-to-do families, was restored. Salvestro de' Medici had been the moderate man throughout the recent troubles. Hence-

forth the history of Florence was to be bound up intimately with his family.

The Medici. The Medici were an old banking family, who came originally from the Mugello, a hilly district to the north of Florence. They were not nobles, but belonged to the *popolani grossi*, or rich men of the people, and they were always prominent among those who contended with the *grandi*. In 1291 Ardirigo de' Medici was one of the Priors; in 1314 Averardo was Gonfaloniere. His son Francesco helped to remodel the Constitution after the expulsion of the Duke of Athens in 1343. The next, Salvestro de' Medici, as Gonfaloniere, was sympathetic towards the poorer people, and was considered partly responsible for the rising of the Ciompi in 1378. He was accordingly exiled in 1382. The real founder of the greatness of the family was Giovanni di Ricci de' Medici, who was born in 1360, and made a large fortune in the banking business. He served the city as a diplomatist in foreign courts, was Gonfaloniere in 1421, and died in 1429.

Cosimo. Giovanni's son was Cosimo, born in 1389. The nobles were still powerful, and in 1433, under Rinaldo Albizzi, they made a great effort against the Medici, and induced the Government to exile Cosimo for ten years. But he had no sooner gone than the people learned to regret his absence, and to remember his splendid hospitality, his generosity, his courteous manners. He returned in 1434, and was hailed as Father of his Country. From this time, so long as the family existed, the Medici never lost their power in Florence.

Cosimo's long and prosperous rule, which lasted till 1464, was like that of the Emperor Augustus in ancient Rome. All the forms of the Republic were preserved: Cosimo was no more than first citizen, with a lease of

power renewed by the people from time to time, whenever he appealed for their support. The taxes were kept high, but the rich city could afford them, and the ample private income of Cosimo was spent in beautifying the city. He built the magnificent Palazzo Medici, now known as the Palazzo Riccardi. He greatly helped towards the splendid dome of the Cathedral, which Filippo Brunelleschi raised, and the paintings of Tomaso Guidi, known as Masaccio, in the chapel of the Brancacci in the Carmelite Church, which is on the other side of the Arno from the Cathedral. Unlike other 'despots', Cosimo, the founder of the longest-lived of the Italian city dynasties, had no idea that his line would last after him. 'I know the humours of my city,' he said; 'before fifty years we shall be expelled, but my buildings will remain.' Yet at his death, in 1464, his son Piero was continued by the citizens in his father's honours.

Piero, though not so able as his father, was a generous, kindly man, and continued the popularity of the great family. He died in 1469, leaving two sons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, too young to rule the State as their father had done, but supported by the large number of families who were by this time attached to the Medici.

Conspiracy of the Pazzi.

In 1478, a hundred years after the rising of the Ciompi, a widespread conspiracy was formed to murder Lorenzo and Giuliano together. Pope Sixtus IV, of the noble house of della Rovere, was hostile to the Medici family, which checked his designs for establishing his nephews as princes in the Romagna. He therefore supported the Pazzi, a Florentine family which had lost its offices under the Medicean rule; and a conspiracy was arranged with the knowledge of Sixtus. Lorenzo and Giuliano were to be invited to a dinner with Cardinal Riario, Sixtus IV's grandnephew, who was on a visit to Florence,

and were to be murdered there on Sunday, April 20, 1478. For some reason, however, on the day of the feast, Giuliano sent word to say he could not come. So the conspirators, taking time by the forelock, resolved to murder the brothers that morning in the Cathedral. At the service of Mass, when the bell was rung at the altar and all knelt at the elevation of the Host, Bernardo Bandini stabbed Giuliano de' Medici. Lorenzo escaped with a slight wound. It was intended to kill the Priors in the public palace, who were in the Medici interest, but the people crowded in the streets crying *Palle! palle!* (the Medici arms were three red balls) and the conspirators were taken and many hanged. The incident shows the growing worldliness of churchmen, for besides Sixtus IV and Cardinal Riario there was also the Archbishop of Pisa in the plot, whom the Florentines accordingly hanged. The worldliness of the Renaissance was appearing, the period of Alexander VI the Borgia, Julius II the warrior della Rovere, and the Medici pope Leo X himself. The failure of the conspiracy of the Pazzi confirmed the power of the Medici in Florence, and the state was from that time practically, though not legally, a monarchy.

Venice.

Milan may be considered the type of Italian despotism; Florence, of Italian republicanism; Venice is the great oligarchy. Its history is quite different from that of every other Italian city, and no one who studies the past has ever failed to be attracted by the grand old city, which remained free and independent till Napoleon overthrew it in 1797. Venice is built on several islands in a lagoon at the head of the Adriatic. The water allowed its people little more space than was enough to build their houses on. Consequently there was no territorial nobility, as there was round Florence, to come

into the city to compete for the magistracy. The Venetians were all traders, and the ruling families were merchants. These great merchant families had no home, no refuge, other than the city itself. They were therefore bound by prudence, as well as by community of interest, to keep on good terms with the rest of the people. Within their sea-girt city aristocracy and populace had to live together. Trade was the only source of wealth, and internal tumult would have ruined it. The ruling families who early acquired wealth succeeded in keeping it; statesmanship and prudence, the tradition of government, became as it were hereditary with them; with wonderful skill and tenacity they guided the state through centuries of trouble, successful abroad, undisturbed by revolutions at home.

Constitution.

The Constitution of Venice, as it is seen in the middle of the thirteenth century, was the regular Italian one of three Councils—a Great Council for legislation, a smaller Council or Senate, to assist in the administration, a third Council for justice. The head official in Venice was called the Doge, with the special characteristic of being elected for life. The life-tenure of the Doge put him above party, and made for the internal stability of the State; while extraordinary precautions were taken to prevent him ever becoming a despot.

The Doge was elected by a very complicated process, by committees of the Great Council. The Great Council was supposed to be elected by the people, but in 1297 the election of members was shared out between the Great Council itself and the Council of Judges. This measure practically closed the Great Council to any one except a member of the great noble families. In 1315 the names of all suitable candidates were written in the 'Golden Book', and from that time there were no further

elections. The Great Council became hereditary. A young nobleman of any of the great families enrolled in the Golden Book took his seat 'per suos et per viginti-quinque annos', by reason of his family and of being twenty-five years old. In 1310 there was a popular rising under Bajamonte Tiepolo, of a family distinguished for its sympathy with the people. Tiepolo was exiled, however, and a Council of Ten was appointed; its proceedings were secret, and its business was to search out any signs of conspiracy and to quash it before it could come to anything. Acting on the principle that prevention is better than cure, the Council of Ten became the most powerful and feared body in Venice. It gradually superseded the Senate in the direction of the policy of the state, and with the Doge and his six councillors it formed the real government of Venice.

Foreign policy.

By reason of her geographical position Venice had three great avenues of trade. One was towards the east, by way of the Adriatic, the Aegean, the Levant. The second was through the eastern passes of the Alps into South Germany, to the Danube and the Rhine. The third was into Lombardy, by the river Po. The last two routes were at the mercy of hostile states or lords; in the Aegean and the Levant Venice was exposed to the rivalry of the republic of Genoa, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the aggressive Turk. It was necessary for her prosperity that she should have a firm foreign policy, directed by wise statesmen. Her oligarchic government gave this to her. The noble families who composed the government were all wealthy merchants, whose business affairs necessarily made them acquainted with political and economic conditions on the routes along which Venice traded. As hereditary statesmen, too, their policy was continuous and persistent. Of all the

Italian states Venice was the most independent in her external relations, and the one whose policy was most consistent and intelligible.

Territorial policy.

The Venetians loved their city, and were content to live in the narrow streets of their island home. But their food had to come from the mainland, and if the neighbouring cities and lords had combined to do so they could have starved Venice out. But the persistence and continuity of her policy gave Venice an advantage over other cities where party politics fluctuated, or where the accident of birth put a weakling in a despot's place. In this way she was able in 1338 to acquire Padua from the della Scala lords of Verona. The practice of Venice after acquiring an Italian town was to grant it self-government under Venetian supremacy.

Venetian, Genoese, and Eastern Trade.

Along the coast of Dalmatia Venice had established trading posts, which she fortified and garrisoned, so that Dalmatia was really a province under a Venetian governor. Crete, the Greek Archipelago, the Bosporus, and the Black Sea were also the scenes of Venice's fruitful commerce. On many of the Greek islands she had her governors and her forts. In Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, she had a special quarter of her own. In Trebizond, at the head of one of the great trade-routes into Asia Minor and to the far East, Venice traded by agreement with the Greek Emperor of that small realm. The ancient city of Sinope was under the Turk, but Venice was allowed to trade there too. Nevertheless the greatest commercial power in the Black Sea was Genoa, which not merely traded, as did Venice, in the Tatar towns of the Crimea, but actually herself owned one, Caffa, which she had purchased from the Tatars, and where a new Genoa had arisen, with wharves and warehouses and stately palaces. It was from Caffa

in 1348 that the Black Death is said to have been brought to Italy. Along the great trade-routes which ended at Trebizond and Sinope were brought silk and spices and perfumed oil of the East, from India and China. From the Baltic and Russia, down the great rivers, came wood, hemp, and furs. The Black Sea was thus the centre of a wonderfully prosperous trade. The Genoese merchants knew both Russia and Persia, and had even their own forts in the Euphrates Valley.

War between Venice and Genoa.

In the middle of the fourteenth century a prolonged war was fought between the two great commercial republics, Genoa and Venice. The issue at stake was trade predominance in the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea, just as Rome and Carthage in earlier days fought for control of the Mediterranean. The actual occasion of the war in 1350 was the attempt of Genoa to prevent Venice from trading with the Tatars of Tana in the Crimea, with whom the Genoese were at war. Venice, being neutral, objected to her peaceful and lucrative trade being cut off by the Genoese blockade, and so war began. If the Genoese had been able to establish a real blockade in the Black Sea, the Venetians would thenceforward only have traded there with her consent.

The hostilities were all at sea, and several notable battles were fought. At the end of January 1352 a titanic struggle took place outside the Golden Horn itself. All day and all night the ships of the Genoese Admiral Doria and of the Venetian Admiral Pisani fought each other. In the darkness 'they divined one another's presence by sound, not by sight; and, when a gust of wind favoured, they let themselves go before it, and rammed'.[1] This fight proved about equally destructive

[1] Sismondi, *Republics*, p. 375.

to both sides. Next year, 1353, the Venetian and Aragonese fleets destroyed or captured the greater part of the Genoese fleet under Admiral Grimaldi, off Loiera, on the Sardinian coast. But in 1354 the Genoese under Paganino Doria utterly crushed the Venetian fleet off Sapienza (Porto Longo) in the Greek Archipelago. Louis, King of Hungary, took the opportunity to descend upon Dalmatia, where Venice held the coast towns Zara, Spalato, Trau. Although she left them their municipal government under Venetian *podestà* of good family, the inhabitants, who were Slavs, were by no means loyal to her. In 1357–8 Louis rewon the Illyrian coast, leaving to Venice her control of the March of Treviso.

In 1378 the great struggle between Genoa and Venice began again, on a scale which seemed likely to ensure the destruction of one or other of the republics. The enemies of Venice were many, but the devotion of her people gave her the ultimate victory. These maritime wars were fought not with condottieri, as were the land wars, but with the sailors of the two republics, commanded by men of the ruling families, the Doria, the Grimaldi of Genoa, the Pisani, Morosini, and other famous houses of Venice.

The first battle of this renewed war took place in 1378, off what is now the great arsenal of Austria-Hungary, Pola. The Venetian fleet was signally defeated, and for his failure the Admiral Pisani was imprisoned after his return to Venice. The Genoese were not slow to follow up their advantage. In alliance with the Carrarese, the lords of Padua, then in revolt from Venice, they laid
Aug. 1379. siege to Chioggia, a Venetian town twenty-five miles down the mainland at the entrance to the lagoon between the low-lying mainland on the one hand and the Agyre, the narrow strip of river-silt, on the other. The capture of

Chioggia laid Venice, hitherto impregnable behind her shallow lagoons, open to attack. The boast of Admiral Doria, that he would bridle the bronze horses of St. Mark, seemed like coming true. The Venetian government was forced by the clamour of the people to sue for peace, but the terms demanded by Genoa were too high, and the people again thought of defence. The Doge, an aged man, belonging to a famous old family, the Contarini, showed energy and decision. The people called outside the prison for the release of Admiral Pisani, who was liberated and who at once set to work to complete the defence of the city with booms and chains and ships. From his command in the eastern Mediterranean came Carlo Zeno to help his suffering country. At the beginning of December 1379 the Doge and Pisani led forth the fleet they had got together, and began a prolonged series of most skilful and patient operations by land and sea, the object of which was to blockade Chioggia and force the garrison and fleet to surrender. Soon the Genoese in Chioggia began to suffer from lack of food; but as other ships of theirs were cruising in strength and commanded the Adriatic, the Venetians themselves were still in danger of starving. On January 1, 1380, the ships of Carlo Zeno managed to join with the blockading fleet of Contarini and Pisani. The Genoese in Chioggia suffered a misfortune: first their Admiral Doria was killed by masonry which one of the rude Venetian land-cannon had managed to hit. His successor Grimaldi, and subsequently Spinola and Maruffo, maintained the defence, which in many respects recalls the famous blockade of the Spartans in Sphacteria by the Athenians during the Peloponnesian war. By June the Genoese 1380.
were starved out, and surrendered on terms. The struggle went on between the two great republics for

another year, each becoming more and more exhausted. The recapture of Chioggia had saved Venice, but could not give her the victory. She ceded the March of Treviso to the Duke of Austria, had to leave the Illyrian sea-coast in the possession of Hungary, and to be content with peace without compensation from Genoa, in August 1381. Padua was left free to the Carrara family.

The war had cost Venice most serious losses in men and ships and untold sums of money. She had lost her possessions on the east of the Adriatic. Yet it was Genoa which suffered in the long run. She never recovered the great commercial position which she had before the war of Chioggia, while the Venetians, having a stable form of government, not subject to revolutions, and being a people completely given up to trade, gradually restored their losses, and built up a new empire. Genoa was, in some respects, a feudal state, with a landed nobility and with party factions. She had powerful neighbours too, who rather overshadowed her — France, a neighbour by land, Aragon by sea. Venice had only the weak Germanic Confederation to the north of the Alps, and between herself and the advancing Turks was the inert Byzantine Empire.

Venice's Land Dominions.

Having saved her foreign markets and her maritime commerce, Venice now set forth to establish a dominion on the mainland. There were three reasons for this policy: one was that Venice was dependent on the mainland for food. The second was that her valuable salt-pans there required to be protected. The third was that the land-routes, as well as the sea-routes, had to be guarded. Her wars on the mainland were not aggressive, not waged to win territory, but were a natural reaction against the all-conquering family of the Visconti. In her maritime operations Venetians fought in the ships,

and Venetians commanded the fleet. But in the wars on the mainland Venice employed mercenaries, under the best condottiere captains whom she could hire. A successful general who was a native Venetian would, it was considered, be dangerous to the stability of the state. The mercenary generals were accompanied by a kind of field-deputies from the Venetian government, to pay the troops and watch their movements.

At first, in 1389 and 1390, Venice was in alliance with Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Galeazzo by this means gained Verona and Padua, which had been client cities of Venice. He, however, died in 1402, and Venice regained the cities. By 1420 a portion of the maritime district of Istria came under the sway of Venice. Thus safeguarded in the east, she was able to turn her attention again to the west.

Milan was under the able and pertinacious Filippo Maria Visconti, who was at war with the free republic of Florence. The Florentines asked for the alliance of Venice, the only other really free republic of the north (for even Genoa was under the influence of the Visconti). The Venetian government, urged by the strong-minded Doge Francesco Foscari, and realizing the disastrous consequences that would ensue if the Visconti state increased much more, joined the Florentines, and twenty years of intermittent war with Milan followed. The Jan. 1426.
Venetian general was the renowned Carmagnola; he had left the Visconti as Filippo Maria was treating him below (as he considered) his deserts. The war was on a scale seldom seen in Italy in the later Middle Ages, as many as 70,000 men being sometimes in the field at once. Yet it was singularly bloodless. Carmagnola was a master of the tactics of the day; in 1426 he captured Brescia, in 1427 he captured the Visconti general Carlo

Malatesta and 8,000 men, without the death of a single soldier, it was said. By 1428 the land frontier of Venice had been extended up to the river Adda.

The war however dragged on, and Carmagnola's tactics grew ever more careful and slow. It was believed that he was prolonging the war, as unscrupulous lazy workmen prolong the 'jobs' on which they are engaged. In 1431 a fleet of Venetian galleys was destroyed by the Milanese on the river Po, and Carmagnola was blamed for not bringing up his troops in time. He was recalled to Venice to make a report, seized, tortured, and then
1432. executed in front of St. Mark's.

After Carmagnola, the great general was Francesco Sforza, who had also made his name in the service of the Visconti, and who was in later days himself to be Duke of Milan. In 1439 Sforza made a masterly campaign by Lake Garda, and saved Brescia from Piccino, the skilful but impetuous general of Milan. In 1441 peace was made, but not for long. Filippo Maria died in 1447, and the Milanese republic was re-established for a brief period. Venice was offered peace, but refused it, as restitution of all the places she had lost was not offered. In 1448 Sforza, now in the service of Milan again, captured the whole of the infantry of the Venetian army, with the loss, it is said, of only one man. The blow was severe, and the next Venetian commander, Bartolommeo Coleoni, although one of the greatest, could do no more than maintain himself against Sforza.

In 1450 Francesco Sforza became Duke of Milan, with the help of Cosimo de' Medici, and Venice felt herself to be in greater peril than ever. She therefore sought to create a new balance of power in Italy, and allied herself with the kingdom of Naples. Florence took the amiable René of Anjou, who was a pretender

to the throne of Naples, into her service, and undertook war on the side of Milan. Lombardy had a taste of the method of fighting of French soldiers, very different from the milder methods of the condottieri. Venice was feeling the strain of her long period of war. On May 29, 1453, Constantinople fell, and for a moment the quarrels of Italy were almost forgotten. In 1454, partly through the influence of Pope Nicolas V, the Peace of Lodi was signed. Milan, Naples, Venice, Florence, and all the little powers who had been fighting made peace. Venice retained the bulk of the territory she had won since the great war opened in 1426, including the fine cities of Bergamo and Brescia. Her food supply was now secure, and her land-routes comparatively safe. Her power was as yet unquestioned at sea; her agreements with the Turks assured her trade at Constantinople. Though not unchallenged, she was to remain mistress of the world's commerce for another half-century, till the daring Portuguese sailors opened the sea-route to India.

Conspiracy of Marino Faliero.

The aristocracy of Venice, like the senators of the ancient Roman republic, had steered the ship of state through stormy seas with constancy and skill. Sober dignified counsellors, clad in plain dark clothes, as they appear still in the pictures of the sixteenth century (which the Italians call the *cinquecento*), they were eminently fitted to rule a mercantile state. Yet once at least their rule was seriously questioned: in 1355 no less a person than the Doge, Marino Faliero, a jealous old man of over seventy years, entered into a conspiracy with discontented members of the plebeian order to overthrow the oligarchy. The plot was discovered by the secret agents of the Ten, and Marino Faliero was decapitated on the great staircase of the court of the ducal palace. When the deed was done the palace gates were thrown open, and a grave

member of the Ten announced to the waiting people, 'Justice has been done on a great villain'. In the palace, among the pictures of the Doges, only a blank space is found where the picture of Marino Faliero should be.

Francesco Foscari.

The term Venetian Doge has been used in modern times as another name for a constitutional monarch of a very limited kind. Yet an able Doge could exert a great influence. It was during the long period of Francesco Foscari, who was Doge from 1423 to 1457, that Venice built up her power on the Italian mainland, a policy which he never ceased to urge. Under him Venice, notwithstanding the long wars, reached probably the height of her prosperity, and justified the noble words of Wordsworth's sonnet on her downfall in 1797. Foscari had more power than most of the Doges, for in the long wars and times of trouble people turned to him, the most determined of all the noblemen, for strength. When eighty-six years old he was still Doge, stricken in years and by the loss of four sons. The Ten would not allow him to end his days in peace as Doge, nor would the determined old man resign the office from which, shortly before, the government had refused to release him, at his own request. But in 1457 the Council of Ten voted him a pension and dismissed him from office. When Francesco Foscari, alone, rejecting all support, slowly descended the steps of the ducal palace before the eyes of the silent counsellors, the greatest figure of Venice departed from it, and her greatest days were over.

Classical studies.

The chief contribution of Italy in the fourteenth century to mankind consists in great works of literature and in the revival of classical studies. For the Renaissance is not a specific event which took place after the fall of Constantinople, or with the discovery of printing, or,

indeed, at any particular time. The Middle Ages were always being reborn, and classical studies were always being revived, just as science never was extinct, although charlatanry often accompanied the genuine experiments of the alchemists.

Giovanni Boccaccio was one who did much both to revive classical studies and to create modern literature. The son of a Florentine merchant, Boccaccio is typical of the great city of the Arno, for he was himself a merchant, a diplomatist, a student, and a man of letters. Yet literature came always first with him. He was born in 1313, it is doubtful whether at Paris or at Certaldo near Florence, and was brought up for the career of a merchant. At the age of twenty he was sent by his father to Naples, to the counting-house of some merchant with whom his father was connected. There Boccaccio was introduced into the society of King Robert's court, the gayest and most brilliant court in this period, except Avignon, when every other great state was at war. Boccaccio met and fell in love with Maria, a lady who, though she returned his affection, could never marry him, as she was already married. She appears in several of his works as Fiametta, and he cherished her memory to the end of his life. In 1350 he returned, at his father's bidding, to Florence, just after the Great Plague, so that, though not himself an eyewitness, he had abundant material for the terrible description he gives of it, at the opening of the *Decameron*. In 1353 the *Decameron* was completed, copied, and published in manuscript. Boccaccio.

These hundred little novels, written in smooth, simple, flexible language, are rightly considered to have made modern Italian prose. In spite of their frequent indecency, which accurately reflects the immorality of both the upper and lower classes of Italian society at that time, they

remain ever charming by reason of their humour, their wit, their easy-flowing narrative, their sketches of character. 'These novels', he says, 'will do good or harm according to the spirit in which they are read.' This is the apology of every indecent writer, and need not be admitted. Boccaccio was a creature of his time; the tone of his work reflects the tone of his age, and the *Decameron* is an historical document, one of the marks by which we can judge of the progress which the world makes. In 1573 a new edition was printed at Florence, under the authority of Pope Gregory XIII, with what were the passages then considered to be objectionable removed: that is to say, for the names of priests and monks the names of laymen were substituted; otherwise the novels remained the same.

As a student Boccaccio is of real importance as a copyist of classical manuscripts, a fruitful work of which very little had been done since the time of Charlemagne. When visiting the famous Abbey of Monte Cassino from Naples he had seen with horror the dusty, uncared for muniment-room, from which the monks took manuscripts to make psalters and amulets. Boccaccio learned Greek, wrote a Latin version of the *Odyssey*, helped to found a 'chair' of Greek in the University of Florence, and had this, among other things, as a great bond of interest between himself and Petrarch, the most classical writer of the Middle Ages. A genuine lover of Greek and Latin studies, Boccaccio yet had no idea of an artificial revival of those studies as written tongues. His own work was done, not entirely indeed, but mainly, in Italian, prose and verse, and it was from this that Chaucer drew his inspiration. Boccaccio was a great admirer of the national literature of Italy, and may be said to have begun that great body of Dante scholarship which is

such a prominent feature of Italian learning to-day. In 1373 he accepted the position of professor at the University of Florence, with the sole duty of expounding the *Divina Commedia*. The result of his studies was a valuable life of Dante, and a commentary on the first sixteen cantos of the *Inferno*. He died at Certaldo in 1375, the year after his friend Petrarch.

Florence was a home of literature, as of classical studies, in the fourteenth century. Yet of her three great sons, three of the greatest names in the literary history of the Middle Ages, Dante spent most of his life in exile, Boccaccio was born elsewhere, and died outside Florence, Petrarch was born the son of an exiled citizen of Florence, and only came to it on visits.

Petrarch. Petrarch was in his time the greatest literary figure in Europe, an arbiter of letters, welcomed in the court of princes, the correspondent of an emperor. Very different was his sunny life from the tragic history of the mighty Dante. But Petrarch was cast in a lighter mould. Filled with high principle, an intellectual and sentimental appreciation of all that was great and good, he himself trod the primrose path, writing magnificent appeals to political liberty, calling on the spirit of the Italian nation to rise; but himself living in ease at the courts of tyrants, who, proud of his distinguished presence, viewed with tolerance and good humour his effusions against despotism, his sonorous praise of liberty. Yet he must not be denied his meed of praise. A great master of pure Italian poetry, a great lover of Italy, he is one of the creators of the Italian nation. As a student of the classics he is one of the leading figures of the Renaissance, a momentous promoter of the new learning.

Petrarch was born on July 20, 1304, at Arezzo, where his father had gone into exile, in consequence of the

same party struggle that had driven Dante from Florence. The mother was not condemned to share the banishment of the father; she brought up young Petrarch at Ancisa, a small property of her husband's, on the Arno, fourteen miles from Florence. In 1313, after a short period at Pisa, the elder Petrarch took his family to Avignon, where he probably was able to pursue his profession as a lawyer. In Avignon the genius of young Petrarch expanded to a more ample degree than might have happened amid the intense but perhaps circumscribed life of the city-state of Florence. At the age of fifteen Petrarch was sent to study law at the University of Montpellier, one of the most famous schools of law and medicine in the Middle Ages. Four years of attending lectures did not make him a lawyer. He was a great reader of Cicero, but it was the rhetorician in Cicero, not the lawyer, that Petrarch loved. From Montpellier his father sent him to the equally famous school of law, Bologna, but still little progress was made. Once his father visited him there, and finding Petrarch's small library of profane works (for the youth was already a collector of manuscripts), threw them into the fire. But the son's tears of genuine anguish melted the stern lawyer's heart, and he rescued Vergil and Cicero from the flames. Vergil, with his rich appeal from ancient Rome, his wonderful poetic imagery, his musical and lofty diction, was the inspirer of all great Italian poetry; to Petrarch he was, as to Dante, the master whom he followed. With Cicero Petrarch has genuine natural affinity: patriotic, eloquent, intensely egotistical, proud of his position and talents, he became even more like Cicero in later life, after his momentous discovery of the Letters to Atticus at Verona in 1345. Petrarch had a great gift of friendship, and to communicate with his absent

friends, like Boccaccio, by carefully-written literary epistles was one of the chief pleasures of his life.

As he did not take kindly to the study of law, Petrarch chose the only other course, which would provide a competence for a man of his studious but by no means ascetic temperament. He took Holy Orders, and henceforth lived comfortably on the proceeds of his preferments, not performing any clerical duties so far as we know; but visiting his friends and patrons, and writing and studying, not intensely perhaps, but continuously. The grand era of the discovery of forgotten classical manuscripts was beginning. Petrarch took part in these great adventures, and, when he died, bequeathed his library to Venice.

His life was spent partly at Avignon, where he describes in burning words the sinfulness of the papal court, and where he first saw Laura in 1327, the inspirer of his sonnets. In 1333 he took refuge from his hopeless passion (for Laura, it seems, was married, and Petrarch was a priest) in travel, to Paris, Ghent, Liége, and the great ecclesiastical city of Germany, Cologne. In 1337 he took a small house at Vaucluse, *vallis clausa*, the little valley of the Sorgue, ten miles from Avignon. Here he lived a solitary life, studying, writing, walking about the sources of the Sorgue, learning to show that appreciation of hills and mountains, which was just beginning (after having been forgotten since Horace's time) in the later Middle Ages. Here, he says,

'I have made two gardens that please me wonderfully. I do not think they are to be equalled in all the world. . . . I am positively angry that there is anything so beautiful out of Italy. One of these gardens is shady, formed for contemplation, and sacred to Apollo. It overhangs the source of the river, and is terminated by rocks, and by places accessible only to birds. The other is nearer my cottage, of an aspect less severe, and devoted

to Bacchus; and, what is extremely singular, it is in the midst of a rapid river. The approach to it is over a bridge of rocks; and there is a natural grotto under the rocks, which gives them the appearance of a rustic bridge. Into this grotto, the rays of the sun never penetrate. I am confident that it much resembles the place where Cicero went to declaim. It invites to study. Hither I retreat during the noontide hours; my mornings are engaged upon the hills, or in the garden sacred to Apollo. Here I would most willingly pass my days, were I not too near Avignon and too far from Italy. For why should I conceal this weakness of my soul? I love Italy, and I hate Avignon. The pestilential influence of this horrid place empoisons the pure air of Vaucluse, and will compel me to quit my retirement.'[1]

Yet he could not keep quite away from Avignon while Laura was alive (she died of the Great Pestilence in April 1348). Many poems in his *Canzonieri*, in pure Italian, were written at Vaucluse; as this, after meeting Laura in the streets of Avignon:

Tired, did you say, of loving you? Oh, no!
I ne'er shall tire of the unwearying flame,
But I am weary, kind and cruel dame,
With tears that uselessly and ceaseless flow,
Scorning myself and scorned by you. I long
For death: but let no gravestone hold in view
Our names conjoin'd; nor tell my passion strong
Upon the dust that glowed through life for you.
And yet this heart of amorous faith demands,
Deserves a better boon, but cruel, hard
As is my fortune, I will bless love's bands
For ever, if you give me this reward.

From Vaucluse and Avignon Petrarch went in 1341 to Naples, where King Robert's court was still the home of the lighter learning and the muses. In the same year he received the poet's laurel crown from the senate on

[1] Campbell (1859), p. xxxvii.

the Capitol of Rome. After that Milan, Padua, Parma were places of his residence, with an occasional visit to his friend Boccaccio at Florence. All the time he was collecting classical manuscripts, and writing Latin letters and verses. The Visconti employed him as a diplomatist, and in 1353 he made a great oration before the Doge and Council of Venice, endeavouring to persuade them, without effect, to stop their war with Genoa. Petrarch was one of those inspired men who dreamed of peace and unity in Italy, and like Dante looked for a controlling monarch, Rienzi, Charles IV. In both of these he was disappointed. With the Republics he was not more successful, though he addressed impassioned words to the Doge of Venice:

'My love for my country forces me to break silence; the goodness of your character encourages me. Can I hold my peace when I hear the symptoms of a coming storm that menaces my beloved country? Two puissant peoples are flying to arms; two flourishing cities are agitated by the approach of war. These cities are placed by nature like the two eyes of Italy; the one in the south and west, the other in the east and north, to dominate over the two seas that surround them; so that, even after the destruction of the Roman Empire, this beautiful country was still regarded as the queen of the world. I know that proud nations denied her the empire of the land, but who dared ever to dispute with her the empire of the sea? . . . Brave men, powerful people! (I speak here to both of you) what is your object, to what do you aspire? What will be the end of your dissensions? It is not the blood of the Carthaginians or Numantians that you are about to spill, but it is Italian blood: the blood of a people who would be the first to start up and offer to spend their blood, if any barbarous nation were to attempt a new irruption among us. In that event their bodies would be the bucklers and ramparts of our common country.'

With this message we may leave Petrarch. He died on July 18, 1374, in his library, in the small house he had retired to, at Arquà, near Padua, among the Euganian hills. He saw the union of Italy afar off. He prepared too for the Renaissance. Himself unable to read in the Greek tongue, a Latinist in scholarship, an Italian in poetry, he pointed the way to that sublime and noble country of classical literature, through only half of which he himself could travel.

CHAPTER X

THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

The Second Part

Charles V of France died on September 16, 1380, leaving his son, Charles VI, a minor of eleven years old. The regency was carried on by the late king's brothers, the Dukes of Anjou and Burgundy, but the Duke of Burgundy took the chief part. Charles V had been a strong king; he had made some improvements in the administration, and had kept a firm hand upon the nobles, preventing private wars, and maintaining the royal rights over their castles. Towards the end of his reign, as peace became more established, he had done something to reduce the taxes. But under the regency the taxation was increased again. This provoked an insurrection in Paris, that of the 'Maillotins', so named from the leaden mallets which they used; in Languedoc there was an insurrection of 'Tuchins', who lurked in the 'touche', the brushwood or woodlands of the province. Such local insurrections were a feature of French history until the centralization of government in the Crown was completely established under Louis XI, and even after that time they did not wholly cease. England had had the Peasants' Revolt in 1381. The states of Western Europe were never quite free from such movements in the Middle Ages.

Insurrections in France.

1382.

The old troubles between the Count of Flanders and the burghers still continued. The Crown and nobles of

Battle of Rosbecque.

France naturally supported the Count, who was a French feudatory. Philip van Artevelde, a son of the famous Jacques, who made such an imposing figure at the opening of the Hundred Years War under Edward III, again raised the citizens of Ghent to assert their independence. A French army advanced into Flanders; Charles VI, aged thirteen, went with it. At the battle of Rosbecque, on November 27, 1382, the Flemings were defeated with great slaughter. It was the victory of a feudal army, fighting in armour, with lance and mace, in the old style.

Administration of Charles VI.

The war with England continued in a desultory way, on the whole to the advantage of the French. The government of Charles VI was fairly efficient. His legal majority had been fixed for the age of sixteen, and, on attaining this, he allowed his affairs to be administered by the former counsellors of his father, trained officials, rather than noblemen, to the exclusion of his uncles. The old trained counsellors of Charles VI were nicknamed 'marmousets', men of no significance, no birth. But they were good administrators, and the country would have done well enough under them and under Charles VI if he had retained his senses. But in 1392 he had a fit of insanity at Le Mans, and though after that he had fairly long periods of sanity, 'lucid intervals', as one French chronicler calls them, he never was fit to govern again. It was this which brought internal strife into the kingdom, civil war which in time gave the opportunity to foreign invasion. The civil war of Burgundians and Armagnacs made possible the partition of France by Henry V of England.

Burgundians and Armagnacs.

The dissensions of rival noblemen were aggravated by the power which these rivals wielded. Philip the Bold, le Hardi, the uncle of Charles VI, was the fourth son of

King John, the 'Good', whom the Black Prince had taken prisoner at the battle of Poitiers. Philip was John's favourite son, and had been given the Duchy of Burgundy by his father in 1363. Thus, subject only to his feudal allegiance to the French crown, he was an independent monarch, with a very large feudal state in the east and north-east of France.

Louis, Duke of Orleans, the brother of Charles VI, was not so strong a man as the Duke of Burgundy. He was a cultivated man, a poet of taste and ability. His son inherited his poetic abilities, and in other ways followed in his father's steps.

Philip the Bold of Burgundy died in 1404, and was succeeded in his great domains, the Duchy and County of Burgundy, the Counties of Charolais, Rethel, Nevers, and many other places, by his son, John the Fearless. John was a small man, with a massive coarse head, no scruples, and enormous ambition. He was thirty-four years old, and meant to rule the kingdom in the madness of the King. But Louis of Orleans was in possession of the power.

Murder of the Duke of Orleans.

In 1405 the Duke of Burgundy took his seat in the King's Council. Disputes quickly arose. John the Fearless acted as a reformer, criticizing the high taxes which Louis of Orleans was imposing to meet the expenses of the war with England. For since Henry IV of Lancaster had come to the English throne in 1399 a desultory state of war with England had begun again. Of the two Dukes, one, Louis, was the head of the royal Government, the other, John, could put many thousands of feudal retainers into the field. The enmity between the two looked like becoming civil war on many occasions, but it was smoothed over from time to time till November 23, 1407, when Louis, Duke of Orleans, was

assassinated. He had gone to the Hôtel Barbette to see the Queen, who had just had her twelfth child, and on his leaving, in the evening, he was stabbed to death in the narrow dark street by a band of masked men. Next day, in the Royal Council, the Duke of Burgundy calmly confided to the Dukes of Anjou and Berry that he had arranged the assassination. After that he left Paris, where the common people supported his party, and betook himself to his own domains. He came back stronger than ever in February 1408, and was received with joyful cries of Noël! Noël! by the populace. He demanded to have his case heard before the great men of the kingdom in the Hôtel Saint-Pol, the magnificent edifice which Charles V had built. There, before the royal Dukes, Jean Petit, a master of the University of Paris, read with a calm voice a justification of the Duke of Burgundy in having the 'tyrant' Duke of Orleans
1408. assassinated. This amazing scene took place on April 8, and lasted from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m.

The young Duke Charles of Orleans took up his father's cause, and a feud began which was not terminated till 1435, after bringing incalculable disasters upon France. Young Charles of Orleans (he was only sixteen at his father's death) had a strong man to rely on. This was Bernard VII, Count of Armagnac, a French nobleman of great estates in the south-west of France, in Gascony, both in that part of it which was occupied by the English, and in the part which was directly under the French crown. The Orleanist or Armagnac party, as it was called, sought by arms to keep control over the royal Government, and to expel the influence of the murderous Duke of Burgundy. Intermittent civil war went on till the invasion of France by Henry V of England in 1415.

English interventions.

The English Government had taken advantage of the civil war in France to regain their influence. In 1411, through young Prince Henry (his father being ill) they made an alliance with the Duke of Burgundy, and sent him 1,200 men under the Duke of Clarence, with whose help the Burgundians drove the Armagnacs out of St. Cloud. Next year the Armagnac party sent representatives to England to make an alliance; and King Henry IV, who seems to have preferred their cause to the Burgundian, granted their request. But the mad King of France, Charles VI, had a period of sanity in which he forced the Burgundians and Armagnacs to be reconciled, so that when a small English force landed to support the Duke of Orleans they found they were not wanted. They returned to England after being paid for their services. Both the parties in turn now had made an alliance with the enemy of France. The fatal consequences of this were shortly to be experienced.

July 15, 1412.

The Cabochiens.

Henry IV died on March 20, 1413, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Henry V, who soon displayed the intention of regaining the lost English provinces in France. Meanwhile France had been troubled by another internal tumult, this time a popular rising in Paris, where under a certain skinner, Caboche, the people, in sympathy with the Duke of Burgundy, but without his active support, rose to demand reforms on the part of the Government. The result of this civic revolution was the promulgation of the Ordonnance Cabochienne, which was published on May 27, 1413. In some ways it is like the reforms demanded in England from time to time from Henry IV and Henry VI. The excessive gifts of land to the nobles, by which the Crown was impoverished, were to be recalled. The royal councillors and great officials were to be appointed by election. The proposed

reforms were excellent, but the royal Government, torn between ambitious factions, could not carry them out.

Agincourt. In August 1415 the English invaded the distracted kingdom. Henry V had formally laid claim to the throne of France, as the heir of Edward III. Strictly speaking the Lancastrians had only a parliamentary title to the English throne; they were not the heirs by blood of Edward III. Yet Henry V soon came to believe with a religious fervour that he had a right to the French throne. Various compromises were suggested, but proved unsuitable, and on August 11, 1415, the English king set sail from Southampton. He landed his force, in all about 30,000 men, including masons, carpenters, and various people attached to the non-combatant services of the army, in the estuary of the Seine, without resistance. His immediate objective was the town of Harfleur, which was at once besieged. After a good defence by the Sire de Gaucourt, who had only a few hundred trained soldiers, it capitulated on September 22, 1415. According to the policy from which Henry V never departed in his wars, the surrendered town was humanely treated.

After a fortnight's rest the English army, reduced by losses during the siege, and by the garrison left in Harfleur, set out to march through the north-east to Calais, the great English fortress in France. The aim of Henry V in this march is not at all obvious. It certainly would not have been safe for him to go straight back from Harfleur to England, with nothing but a small town gained, and with the loss of half his army. He may have hoped to entice the French to a pitched battle, where he might put his whole fortune to the stake. The desperate venture was successful. Henry was probably counting on the neutrality at least of the

Duke of Burgundy, whose secret negotiations with him in 1414 have only recently come to light. But John the Fearless was not a safe man to rely upon.

Henry V was a man who exacted the whole of what he considered his just rights, but was unswervingly bent on being equally just to others. The strictest discipline was preserved in his army, and plunderers were hung or buried alive in the ground. In this way the army made an exciting march, finding its way with difficulty, and being nearly cut off several times by apparently bridgeless rivers, for there seem to have been no maps of any kind in use in the English army. Meanwhile John the Fearless kept to his own dominions, and the Armagnacs were left in control of what there was of the royal Government. John's policy was clearly double. By abstaining from the French side, he did nothing to incur the hostility of Henry V, should the English king prove successful. Yet he allowed his son Philip, known afterwards as Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, to fight in the French army.

The French Government were very slow to get their great forces ready, and it was not till two months after Henry V had landed that they were really able to meet him. However, when the English army, numbering about 11,000 men, of whom perhaps 9,000 were long bowmen, were drawing near to Calais, they found their way barred by about 50,000 French, mainly nobles and men-at-arms, organized like the feudal armies of sixty years before. In spite of their time and opportunities the French had not chosen a particularly good position, as owing to the nature of the country they could not make use of their great numbers. If they only had let Henry V go back to England with his disconsolate and diminished forces, they might never have been troubled by him again.

But the lessons of the great Constable du Guesclin were forgotten. On October 25, 1415, they attacked the English, who were planted on the flat ground, with woods on either flank, between the villages of Agincourt and Tramecourt. The heavily armoured, dismounted men-at-arms of the French army were almost immobilized by the muddy ground (for it had been raining for days), and by the congestion due to the narrow field. The English archers shot them down, and then finished off the rest with their knives and hatchets. The losses are computed by modern French historians at 400 to 500 for the English, about 7,000 for the French. The French losses were all from the class of noblemen, and, as the *noblesse* formed what might be called the standing army of France, the disaster was a crippling one. After the battle Henry V marched on to Calais and returned to England, as his men were too few and his communications too insecure to admit of his taking immediate advantage of his signal victory.

Periods of the Hundred Years War.

The rest of the Hundred Years War may be divided into three periods: first, the conquest of Normandy and the whole northern part of the French kingdom, a period which may be taken as ending with the death of Henry V in 1422. Second, the period ending 1431, in which the great figures are the Duke of Bedford on the English side, and Joan of Arc on the French: during most of this second period the English were maintaining their conquests, but at the end of it the French were beginning steadily to regain what they had lost. The third period may be taken to be from the death of Joan of Arc, on May 28, 1431, to 1453, when the English were finally expelled from the whole of France, except Calais. The most significant event in this third period was the action of Philip the Good of Burgundy, in definitely leaving the

English side and joining himself to the French national cause.

In this long struggle the representatives of monarchy on either side were notable men. Henry V of England was a man with a fixed idea—that his duty to God and his people lay in establishing his claim, his just right, as he considered it, to the crown of France. It would be natural to expect that a man of such a fixed and illogical idea would have a rigid mind, without any real intellectual capacity. But the contrary is true. Henry V had probably the most original mind of all the English kings. He was perhaps the only mediaeval general outside Italy who systematically thought out whole campaigns, as distinct from battles. The idea of practically all other mediaeval generals, like the Black Prince (du Guesclin is to a certain extent an exception) was, quite properly, to meet the enemy's forces and to defeat them. But, having gained a battle, they did not know what more to do: they could only think of laying waste the surrounding country or besieging a neighbouring town. Henry V, on the other hand, in his campaigns after Agincourt, always proceeded throughout upon a definite plan. He marked out a series of towns, the possession of which would secure a particular province or district. He then began to 'take in' those towns in a definite order or series, so that the conquest of one should make easier the conquest of the next, and so that he should also have a real system of communications, a chain of posts, with garrisons, connecting his field-army with his bases on the sea, and with any other point with which he wished to keep in touch. He never laid waste the country, but was careful to give just and regular administration, so that the occupied districts were held with surprising ease.

Ability of Henry V.

Charles VII.

The representative of monarchy on the French side belonged to a different type of man. The Dauphin, who after the death of the mad king Charles VI in 1422 became Charles VII, did not give people the impression of being a strong man; but his coolness, his pertinacity, and the shrewdness which he showed in using men with certain kinds of ability, enabled him in the long run, not merely to witness the expulsion of the English from France, but to see the monarchy rising on the ruins of the Hundred Years War to the highest point it had ever reached, with the whole government centralized in the King. No one ever quite got to the bottom of Charles VII's mind or heart. He had always something in reserve, and though he knew what his own mind was he never told any one else, or even showed that it was made up. Therefore, although he gave no outward signs of strength or brilliance, every one respected him and every one was a little afraid of him. His long tenure of power, practically from the time of Agincourt till his death in 1461, made him, through all the vicissitudes of France during that period, the representative of French national feeling, the type or symbol of the permanence of the independent French nation. It is for this reason that this somewhat enigmatical king may be considered as the founder of the later French monarchy, the autocratic national monarchy of Francis I or Louis XIV.

The second expedition of Henry V.

1417.

On August 1, 1417, Henry V returned to France and began the conquest of Normandy. He made a defensive agreement with the Duke of Burgundy, who forebade Burgundian subjects to answer the call of the King of France. Henry first laid siege to Caen, which capitulated on September 20, 1417. Then he gradually advanced into upper Normandy, proposing to work round and

to come upon Rouen from the south, after having cut its communications with Paris. This enterprise occupied winter and spring, 1417–18. On June 23 (1418) the important town and castle of Louviers were taken, and a few weeks more work completed the isolation of Rouen.

The siege of Rouen, May 1418.

Meanwhile the Duke of Burgundy had gained an entrance to Paris, where the Armagnac party had been behaving with great licence and cruelty. The entrance of the Burgundians was followed by a massacre of Armagnacs in the prisons. John the Fearless now controlled the Government, and disregarding his conventions with the English, began to take some measures for defence. When Henry V laid siege to Rouen it was defended by a Burgundian captain, Guy le Bouteiller. The burgess militia and bowmen were under a local man, Alan Blanchard, whom Henry afterwards hung. The siege was long and miserable, both sides showing the greatest courage and endurance. It was not till January 19, 1419, that Rouen capitulated. Henry V then completed the conquest of Normandy, and organized the Government after much the same fashion as it had been under the French. Numbers of the smaller gentlemen and clergy accepted his rule and swore allegiance to him, but not the greater nobles or prelates.

The murder at Montereau.

Here Henry's conquests might have stopped, for the Duke of Burgundy and the Armagnacs, among whom the Dauphin was now the chief man, with Tanneguy du Chastel the Provost of Paris, were coming into accord. At the same time Duke John did not break off his negotiations with the English. He was in fact playing a double game. On September 10 he and the Dauphin met on a bridge 1419.
thrown over the Seine at Montereau, to discuss how they might work together. Sharp words arose between them, and Duke John is said to have made a threatening gesture.

He was at once cut down by Tanneguy du Chastel and others.

The Treaty of Troyes.

The effect of the murder at Montereau was to throw the Burgundian party on to the side of the English. This explains the rapid successes of Henry V which followed. The English forces were pushing on from Normandy into Champagne. On May 20 King Henry and the young Duke Philip of Burgundy met at Troyes. The Queen and the mad king Charles VI and his daughter Catherine had their court there with the Burgundians. All the preliminaries had been arranged beforehand, and on May 21 the famous Treaty of Troyes was signed. The Dauphin was declared to be disinherited; Henry V was to be 'heir of the King of France'. The laws and constitution of the kingdom of France were to be maintained as before. The great lords, French and English, swore to the Treaty in the Cathedral Church of Troyes, and Henry married the Princess Catherine.

1420.

June 2.

The King of Bourges.

Yet Henry V never became King of France, nor did his power ever extend much south of Paris. The rest of the country outside Burgundy remained under the Dauphin, who, although cut off from the Channel, was able to receive assistance through Poitou from Scotland. Refusing to acquiesce in his disinheritance, he kept his court at Bourges, surrounding himself with subtle determined councillors like Tanneguy du Chastel, and hard fighting captains like the Bastard of Orleans, La Hire, Pothon de Saintrailles, and others of the class of professional soldiers, which again, as after the victories of Edward III and the Black Prince, began to grow up in France.

The English in Paris.

The alliance with the Burgundians, and the possession of the person of the King, enabled Henry V and the

English army to enter Paris. In December 1420 he held a session of the Estates General at Paris, and arranged matters for the government of the kingdom, for regulating the coinage, for defence against the Dauphin. Food was extremely dear, and the burgesses of Paris were inclined to welcome the peace and order which followed Henry V wherever he went. But they disliked the sight of the English captains, and felt, as Georges Chastellain the Burgundian chronicler says, that 'Paris, the ancient seat of the royal majesty of France, was becoming a new London'.

Death of Henry V and of Charles VI.

At the end of the year 1420 Henry returned to England, where the people were beginning to grumble at the amount of taxation which was necessary for the wars in France. While he was away the Dauphinist forces, led by the Scottish Earl of Buchan, who had brought reinforcements through La Rochelle, won a smartly fought action at the Bridge of Beaugé, in Anjou, over the Duke of Clarence, on March 23, 1421. Clarence, who was a dashing soldier and Henry's lieutenant in Normandy, was killed. The battle of Beaugé was the first success of the depressed Dauphinist party, and although they were to have no more victories for seven years, it was really the beginning of the regaining of France. In June 1421 Henry V returned with a strong army, and from Paris began, in his deliberate way, to lay siege to one town after another to the south and east of the capital. He was steadily conquering France down to the Loire and up the Marne when he died of hardship and exposure, at Vincennes, outside Paris, on August 31, 1422, aged thirty-four. The poor mad king Charles VI 1422.
died on October 21 of the same year. Each left a son, who seemed to have exchanged their father's qualities. Henry VI inherited Charles VI's madness. The Dauphin

(Charles VII) had a good deal of the constancy and sagacity, though not the heroic qualities or genius, which had distinguished Henry V.

Reign of Charles VII.

The reign of Charles VII is the story of the recovery of the lost provinces, and of the growth of the royal power, a period of great exhaustion and misery for the population, during a war that seemed never ending.

Administration of the Duke of Bedford.

For a few years after the death of Henry V and of Charles VI, the English cause, aided by Duke Philip of Burgundy, seemed to make headway. The Duke of Bedford, Henry V's brother, was a most capable soldier and administrator. At Crevant in Champagne a force of Charles VII, the 'King of Bourges', was cut up by the English and Burgundians on July 31, 1423. On August 17, 1424, at Verneuil in the Duchy of Alençon, Bedford crushed the Dauphinist army in a battle which the English looked upon as another Agincourt. With the arms of peace Bedford laboured with equal strenuousness. 'La France anglaise', as the French historians call the provinces in the hands of the English, was well governed. The evil of debased coinage was dealt with, and a good currency, with the image of King Henry VI, circulated north of the Loire. The Parliament of Paris, consisting entirely of French lawyers, was maintained, the Estates General dealt with legislation, only Frenchmen as far as possible were employed in civil offices. The University of Caen still remains a memorial of the enlightened administration of its founder Bedford. Yet the condition of the country under the English was not happy. Taxes were high, and commerce and agriculture much hampered by the state of war. Plundering was severely punished, but could not always be prevented on the part of the English soldiers.

The condition of the country under the 'King of

Bourges' was little better, except in the parts remote from the scene of hostilities. The early years of Charles VII's reign were not prosperous. Called at the age of nineteen to the throne of a partitioned kingdom, a melancholy young man with ill health and a taste for solitude, he began by allowing his council to be managed by favourites, and his treasury to be exploited by parasites. The condition of Poitou under Charles VII degenerated for some years into pure anarchy. The frontier between the French and English power was a kind of no man's land, where small nobles and knights formed brigand companies and lived on the land, while pretending to maintain the cause of the King of Bourges. A novel written about 1450 describes the life of one such brigand, called *le Jouvencel*, who may have been drawn from the historical figure of Etienne de Vignolles surnamed *La Hire*, who seems to have carried on irregular warfare against the English, at first without any connexion with the government of Charles VII. This war of partisans was extremely effective against the scattered forces of the English occupation. It was waged according to the principles of du Guesclin, and gradually it produced a second school of professional soldiers (as du Guesclin had produced the first school, in the wars against Edward III). But bands of partisans, although they could injure the English and cause them continual losses, could not defeat the English forces in the field. When, however, the enthusiasm of Joan of Arc had roused the people of all classes to make a great effort, the professional soldiers formed a body of leaders and trained men, without whom the enthusiasm of the Maid would have had little practical effect.

Conduct of the war under Charles VII.

The appearance of the Maid in the Hundred Years War is one of the most striking events in history, marking

Effect of Joan of Arc.

as it does the turning-point in the long drawn out contest between England and France. She wrought such a marvellous work upon the French people because she came, a poetic female figure, with lofty views and unselfish devotion, into a field already prepared. The seed of patriotism had been sown. It had attained a literary expression. Joan came and made it a lively sentiment.

Literature and the War.

The learned class, those who read and wrote in Latin, were conscious of the miseries of France. Robert Blondel, a Norman (known still for his Chronicle, On the Conquest of Normandy of 1449), wrote about 1420 a 'Complaint of the good Frenchmen'. Alain Chartier wrote a number of works in Latin, one the *Invective quadrilogue* containing the famous representation, now adopted by the Republic, of France as a woman, noble and gracious, calling upon her sons to support her. Joan of Arc, simple peasant as she was, herself appeared as such a woman.

Joan of Arc.

Joan was born sometime between 1410 and 1412 at Domrémy, a village in the Vosges on the frontier of Champagne and Bar. She grew up helping in the work of the house and farm, for her father was owner of his small piece of land, and Joan helped to look after his sheep on the slopes of the Vosges. It was there that she heard the voices of St. Michael, St. Catherine and St. Margaret. Champagne was in the hands of the English and Burgundians: the Barrois, in which half the village of Domrémy stood, was still held for the Dauphin by the valiant captain Robert de Baudricourt. Joan could not read nor write, and can have known nothing of the works of Robert Blondel or Alain Chartier. But she was inspired by the same feelings, though she lived on a loftier plane. The desolation of Champagne and

the increasing insecurity of the Barrois filled her with sorrow. She had perhaps herself seen the Burgundian men-at-arms driving off the cattle of the peasants of Domrémy in 1425. and the smoke of the village of Révigny in the Barrois, which an English band had burned. Her 'voices' gradually convinced her of her duty, and, simple and modest as she was, she came to think she had been chosen to save France. In January 1429, three months after the English had begun the great siege of Orleans, Joan went to Vaucouleurs, and by her evident sincerity, charm and simplicity persuaded Robert de Baudricourt to send her, escorted by six men-at-arms, to Chinon where Charles VII, the 'Dauphin', whom she said she would lead to Reims to be crowned, held his court. The doubting, melancholy Charles was moved to give her an opportunity, and in 1429. April she was sent to the army which was collecting at Blois for the relief of Orleans.

Her influence.

Joan had triumphed by sheer simplicity and beauty of character, yet only in the Middle Ages, which are sometimes called the Ages of Faith, would she have been received so seriously. The distinguished French satirist and novelist, M. Anatole France, has given another explanation. There were subtle clerical statesmen at the court of the Dauphin, who saw the possibilities of this enthusiastic maiden, how she might stir up people (as they themselves were unable to do) and give the driving force to a cause of which they would have the practical management. It may be so. Faith and reason were no doubt combined—the faith of the Maid, and the reason of the statesmen. Joan was honest and unselfish, and these qualities are impressive in every age. Like all soldiers, the rough licentious Armagnac bands had yet a strong vein of chivalry, and they followed and respected

the Maid, without necessarily believing in her divine mission. What she did was to make them think of something outside themselves, of that 'doux pays de France', of which she so sadly and so sweetly spoke. The Armagnac defence, which had tended to degenerate into brigandage, became steady and deliberate, ceased to be the war of a party, and became national.

The Siege of Orleans.

The siege of Orleans by the English was meant to be the preliminary step to a great policy of extending the English dominion south of the Loire, of carrying the war into the 'kingdom of Bourges'. Orleans itself is on the north bank of the Loire, with a bridge, and a *tête de pont* on the south side. The capture of the city would ensure a safe passage into the Dauphin's territory. The siege, which was thus to be the first step in further conquests for the English, marks in fact, the limit of their advance. The numbers of the besieging army were small, apparently only about 7,000, and they never were able really to invest the town. From the opening of the siege on October 7, 1428, till it was raised by Joan's army on May 8, 1429, French convoys from time to time entered the beleaguered city. Joan was no general; she did not even know that Orleans was on the north, not the south bank of the Loire. But she was enthusiastic and energetic, and when she led forth the relief army from Blois on April 28, she was practically certain of success, for the English were dispirited with long waiting and profitless fighting; her own army, led by experienced captains, and fired by the example of the Maid, was confident of victory.

1429.

French successes.

The raising of the siege of Orleans caused a real enthusiasm throughout France; and the failure of their great effort, on which the last resources of an almost bankrupt treasury had been spent, correspondingly

demoralized the English. Joan, like a good commander, followed up her success at once: stormed Jargeau on June 12, and routed the rear-guard of the English forces, 1429. which was under the famous Sir John Fastolf, near Patay on the 18th. Then the army was directed upon Reims, which it reached along a chain of captured fortresses. In the noble cathedral of Reims on July 12 the Dauphin was solemnly crowned; Joan's prophecy and her mission were then fulfilled.

The English never recovered their lost ground, though Joan herself, now a figure of European celebrity, had only a short course still to run. She was ruined by the inertia of Charles VII. Her single idea after the coronation at Reims was to push on, to expel the English totally from France. Charles, however, would scarcely move. His resources too, like those of the English, were low: the effort of relieving Orleans must have been a strain. Joan persisted in urging an active policy. In March 1430 she set out for the Marne country, where the English and Burgundians had still some strength. The town of Compiègne had been taken from the Burgundians and was now in turn besieged by an Anglo-Burgundian force. On May 23, 1430, Joan and her companions effected an entry into the beleaguered town at dawn. On the same day the impetuous Maid put herself at the head of a band and made a sortie against the besiegers. The sortie failed and Joan was captured. Her work was now done. For six months she was a prisoner of the Burgundian captain John of Luxemburg. Charles VII could have ransomed her, but did nothing. So she was ransomed into the hands of the English for 10,000 *livres tournois*, and put in prison first at Compiègne, then at Rouen. On February 21 her trial began before a court consisting of doctors and

Capture of Joan.

clergy, chiefly members of the University of Paris, chosen for their sympathy with the Burgundian party. On
1431. May 31 she was burned in the market-place of Rouen as a heretic, an apostate, an idolater. With her last words she exclaimed that her voices had been from God, and that she died with the conviction of having performed His wishes. After the long trial in her last imprisonment, her overstrained spirit had shown some signs of breaking. But she died as she had lived, a singularly honest and brave and noble soul.

Burgundy joins the national side.

After Joan's death the war again lost all cohesion and degenerated into a sort of brigandage; the Dauphin's lands suffered far more from his own soldiers than from the English. Both sides were becoming greatly exhausted, and it looked as if each would go on plundering the other, and living upon the unhappy country till the crack of doom. Both sides were equally balanced, and only the defection of a solid part from one side could give the ascendancy to the other. The side of Charles VII, though torn by feuds and selfish coteries of courtiers was, with regard to the English, fairly solid. There was now a national feeling in addition to all the local selfishnesses. The English party, on the other hand, was not solid: the support of the Burgundians was necessary to it, but the Burgundians after all were Frenchmen. Even John of Bedford could not guarantee the continuance of that alliance. In 1435, by the Peace of Arras, Duke Philip, who for some years had been growing lukewarm towards the English, made terms with Charles VII. From this moment the expulsion of the English was only a question of time. The peace was concluded between Charles VII and Philip the Good on September 21, 1435. Seven days before, in the castle of Rouen, death had taken the indomitable John of Bedford from the hopeless task

which King Henry V had confided to him, and to which he had devoted his life.

After the Treaty of Arras Charles VII shook himself free from his favourites, and entrusted his counsels to the energetic Bastard of Orleans, whose firm-knit soldierly figure is pleasingly described in Scott's novel of *Quentin Durward*, and to the Constable, Arthur of Richemont, brother of the Duke of Brittany. On April 13, 1436, Richemont gained Paris. By the end of the year 1441 the whole 'Isle de France' was won. In 1444 a truce was arranged by the Earl of Suffolk; Henry VI of England married the cousin of Charles VII, Margaret of Anjou. Peace between the two governments lasted till 1449, when a mercenary captain called François de Surienne or 'L'Aragonois', in the service of the English, led his men (whose pay was probably long in arrears) over the border of Brittany and sacked the prosperous manufacturing town of Fougères. Charles VII's resources were better now. He took up the cause of Brittany. A disciplined and properly paid army was sent into Normandy, which under the ill-paid English mercenaries was in a state of half-suppressed rebellion. Within a year the whole of Normandy was reconquered. The last English expeditionary force sent into the Duchy was annihilated by the now highly efficient French artillery at Formigny on April 15, 1450. The invasion of Guienne was then taken in hand by Dunois, the Bastard of Orleans. In Guienne the English were always fairly popular; Bordeaux, which thrived on the wine-trade with England, was an opulent, self-governing town. The other towns and the country were treated as a free dependency by the English government. Nevertheless, by the middle of 1451 Dunois had conquered Guienne. Yet the Gascons still regretted the loss of the

The conquest of Normandy and Guienne.

March 24 1449.

Aug. 1449 - Aug. 1450.

English connexion, and disliked the new government of Charles VII with its efficiency and its taxes. In 1452 the war-worn Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, brought a small force and raised the country, but on October 19, 1453, his 8,000 men were met and defeated by Jean de Bueil and Jacques de Chabannes at Castillon. Talbot as usual went straight to the attack, but the contest was hopeless. The French force had 300 cannon; Talbot's men went down before the storm of shot, and he himself lay dead upon the field. 'La France anglaise' existed no more. The English still had an outpost in Calais, which they held till 1558. The English king retained the empty title of King of France till 1801. Nevertheless from 1453 France was wholly independent, united, and a nation. All the conquests were added to the royal domain. Nothing remained outside but the great ducal fiefs of Burgundy and Brittany.

Effects of the Hundred Years War upon France.

1. Nationality.

Such a long war, with the foreigner for thirty years living on the land, and civil war going on concurrently, could not be without momentous results for the history of France. In the first place, the French became conscious of themselves, conscious that they were a people, as distinct from a number of local and separate fiefs under the Crown. The enthusiasm caused by Joan of Arc's victories is a stage in the development of this feeling, as is also the fact that the learned Juvénal des Ursins, the historian of Charles VII, wrote his work in French, not Latin. In the second place, government became more than ever centralized in the Crown, which was the symbol of the national independence and the centre of the national resistance. In a prolonged war the executive government, which can act speedily and secretly, is certain to gain power at the expense of the legislative body, which can only act slowly, and whose

deliberations are known to the enemy. While Charles VII was only king at Bourges it was impossible to get representative Estates General together, so he formed the habit, to a large extent, of doing without them. Apart from feudal dues and proceeds of the royal domain, the chief means of raising money was by the *aides*, which were special sums voted by the Estates for extraordinary occasions like war, and the *taille*, a sort of occasional property-tax. After 1436 the *aides* were levied regularly, without the consent of the Estates being asked. After 1439, when a famous session of the Estates General was held at Orleans, the *taille* was perpetually levied. The *aides* and the *taille* assured the Crown a large amount of income independently of the legislative body, and accordingly the Crown became absolute.

2. The Crown.

A third result of the great wars was that France made an enormous advance in military efficiency. The feudal levy, with its rigid principles under its undisciplined bodies of knights, had only brought disaster upon France, at Agincourt and Verneuil. Its place was taken by a professional army; the king employed trained captains who raised and paid bands of men whose trade was fighting. The great period of military reform was from the truce with the English in 1444 to the reopening and last stage of the Hundred Years War in 1449. Even earlier, in the Estates General at Orleans, important measures had been taken to reform military discipline: troops were only to be cantoned or billeted in certain localities, and were to be paid monthly. This reform was finally put into effect from the year 1445, and at the same time a standing force of fifteen companies o one hundred lances each was established. The king gradually came to possess a good store of artillery both for the royal castles and for use in the field. The

3. The Army.

1439.

development of this arm was largely due to Pierre Bassonneau, grand master of the artillery from 1420 to 1444. The rude cannon were carried about on carts, and it was they which assured the conquest of Normandy in 1449–50.

The Écorcheurs.

The 'Écorcheurs' were the great evil of France. They consisted of bands of unpaid soldiers, English, French, and freelances of all countries, often under regular French captains, like La Hire, Saintrailles, Robert Floquet, who lived on the country where they were quartered, and when it was exhausted went without any official permission to some other district which offered a richer field. The towns, defended by their own burgher-militia, were of course fairly safe, but the country-side suffered terribly. Villages were sacked, men tortured, women treated with the most horrible injuries. The novel *le Jouvencel* shows this life of the demoralized soldier at large to have been as much a matter of course, as, for instance, it was in the Thirty Years War, as described in Grimmelshausen's novel, *Simplicissimus*. Both authors had lived through the scenes they described. The worst period of the 'Écorcheurs' ('skinners', because they stripped people to the skin for plunder) was after the Peace of Arras, made in 1435 between Charles VII and Philip the Good of Burgundy. Most of the bands of Burgundian soldiers in the service of the duke were disbanded. As friends they proved worse than they had been as enemies, for they now joined the bands who nominally acknowledged Charles VII, and lived upon their own countrymen. The military reforms of 1445 did much to reduce this evil by absorbing a certain number of the Écorcheurs into the regular army, and using these to deal effectively with the rest. The regular forces gradually exterminated this scourge.

CHAPTER XI

THE CONTEST WITH ISLAM

THE Empire of the great Mongolian conqueror, Jenghis Khan, extended from China to the river Dnieper in Russia. When he died in 1227 a small clan of Turks, who had fled before the Mongols out of Khorasan, were settling in the hilly country to the east of Erzeroum. Most of Asia Minor was under the Seljuk Turks, with whom the new-comers took service. Their first great chief was Ertoghrul, who died in 1288; his son was Osman or Othman, a great general and the founder of the Empire of the Ottoman, as distinct from the Seljuk Turks. By the end of the thirteenth century the Seljuk Empire went the way of every Oriental despotism, except the Ottoman; it crumbled to pieces as its dynasty grew weaker; its various parts broke off and became independent. Osman's share in this general break-up was Asia Minor from Brusa to the Sea of Marmara, with the exception of a few places still held by the Greeks of Constantinople. He died in 1326. To the north, between the Sea of Marmara and the Balkans, was the feeble Byzantine Empire under the ruling house of Palaeologus. To the east was another small Greek state, protected by mountainous country, the Empire of Trebizond, under the ancient Byzantine House of Comnenus.

The rise of the Ottoman Turks.

Osman was succeeded by his younger son Orkhan, who ruled from 1326 to 1359. He completed the conquest of the places still held by the Constantinople Greeks in Asia Minor, and established the corps of

Orkhan.

1330. Janissaries, the standing army of the Turks. While all Moslems under the Ottoman rule were liable to military service, the service was not regular or organized. The Janissaries were a standing corps, recruited by a forced levy exclusively from Christians, first from those in Asia Minor, later from those in Bosnia, Albania, or Bulgaria.

Conquests in Europe. The next Ottoman Sultan, Murad or Amurath I, carried the war into Europe. In 1360 he crossed the Hellespont with his army, and began to work round the Byzantine Empire, which was soon left like an island, washed by seas of Turks. In 1361 Adrianople was taken and became the residence of the Sultans. In 1364 the Turks took the important city of Philippopolis from the Bulgarians who were at that time divided among a number of petty princes. The large Serbian state, which had risen to great power under 'Tsar' Stephen Dushan, who died in 1355, now took up the task of driving back the Turks. It was the Turks, however, who did the attacking, and on August 27, 1389, the whole Serbian army was laid low on the plain of Kossovo. The Sultan Murad was assassinated immediately after the battle by a Serbian.

Bayezid I. The next Sultan, Bayezid I, after executing his brother to prevent him becoming a rival for the throne, carried the war through Bulgaria. In 1395 he was reducing Macedonia, when Pope Boniface IX and King Sigismund of Hungary brought a crusading force from Europe, which crossed the Danube and besieged Nicopolis in 1396. The siege was raised by Bayezid, who completely overthrew the Christian army. The Sultan would have taken Constantinople too (which he had already unsuccessfully besieged in 1395), but that the advance of the great Tatar conqueror Timur or Tamerlane from Samarcand distracted his efforts. Timur advanced up

to Asia Minor and met the Sultan's forces at Angora. One of the decisive battles of the world took place between the two greatest Oriental Powers that the world had seen. The Turkish army was routed and the Sultan taken prisoner, and though respectfully treated, died in captivity. Timur advanced into Asia Minor, but did not cross into Europe; he was now sixty-five, and he wished to conquer China before he died. In this effort he expired in February 1405. 1402.

After an interregnum of ten years Mohammed I (1413–21), the son of Bayezid, was able to establish himself throughout the Turkish Empire, which he reorganized and succeeded in making again a first-class fighting power. The next Sultan, Murad II, was troubled by pretenders, and just failed to take Constantinople in 1422. However he captured the great commercial city of Salonika, where the Venetians had established themselves, and which was defended by only 1,500 soldiers of that energetic people. A further advance was made up the Danube, but in 1442 and 1443 the great Hungarian general, John Hunyadi, drove them back. Murad died in 1451 and was succeeded by his son Mohammed II. Capture of Salonika.

The magnificent city of Constantinople is built on a peninsula which runs out into the southern waters of the Bosporus, with the splendid natural harbour of the Golden Horn on the north and the Sea of Marmara on the south. Built like Rome upon seven hills, with water on two sides and rough hilly country on the other, it is one of the strongest places in the world. Cut off though the Byzantine Empire now was by land from the rest of Europe, it was still an opulent state, the great market of the Venetian and Genoese merchants, for each of these two cities had its own quarter in Constantinople, where their merchants had their warehouses and Constantinople in the early fifteenth century.

palaces. The Greeks of Constantinople, however, were in many ways a debased race. The aristocracy were no longer the hill-bred race of Cappadocian lords who had done battle with the Bulgars on one side, the Seljuk Turks on the other. They were a rich, unwarlike class, living in great splendour in their palaces, attending on a court which was half-Orientalized, where the only soldiers were some foreign mercenaries, and the chief officials were eunuchs. The lower classes were no better, loafers about the harbour, leading a lazy and immoral life upon state doles from a treasury of which the resources came from customs-duties, a tribute levied from the energy of the Venetians and Genoese.

Learning.

Yet learning still flourished in Constantinople. The large body of clergy, secular and monastic, spoke Greek and read the Greek classics. The aristocracy were cultivated too. Their learning is described shortly before the fall of Constantinople by the well-known scholar Filelfo.

'In familiar discourse, they still speak the tongue of Aristophanes and Euripides, of the historians and philosophers of Athens; and the style of their writings is still more elaborate and correct. The persons who, by their birth and offices, are attached to the Byzantine court, are those who maintain with the least alloy the ancient standard of elegance and purity; and the native graces of language most conspicuously shine among the noble matrons, who are excluded from all intercourse with foreigners. With foreigners do I say? They live retired and sequestered from the eyes of their fellow-citizens, seldom are they seen in the streets; and when they leave their houses, it is in the dusk of evening, on visits to the churches and their nearest kindred. On these occasions, they are on horseback, covered with a veil, and encompassed by their parents, their husbands, or their servants.'[1]

Cultivated but half-Orientalized, their women kept in

[1] Quoted by Gibbon, ch. lxvi (ed. 1855, vii. 241).

a sort of Mohammedan seclusion, the men of Constantinople were little likely to be a match for the stalwart Turks. These are described as both sober and martial. The Turkish Empire has from its earliest time included a large number of different races under its control; nor has it confined its army, nor even its high military or official positions to any one of these races. The hardy Anatolian peasants of Asia Minor, the warlike Albanians, Serbs, and Bulgars, from neighbouring countries of Europe, were enrolled and trained with equal care. The most talented youths were educated in the Sultan's schools at Brusa, at Pera, at Adrianople. There is no hereditary aristocracy in the Turkish Empire, and even amid continual unblushing peculation and official corruption, merit, wherever found, though without birth or influence, has always been considered sufficient ground for advancement:

Character of the Turks.

'In the slow and painful steps of education, their characters and talents were unfolded to a discerning eye; the *man*, naked and alone, was reduced to the standard of his personal merit; and if the sovereign had the wisdom to choose, he possessed a pure and boundless liberty of choice. The Ottoman candidates were trained by the virtues of abstinence to those of action; by the habits of submission to those of command. A similar spirit was diffused among the troops; and their silence and sobriety, their patience and modesty, have extorted the reluctant praise of their Christian enemies.'[1]

When Mohammed II came to the Ottoman throne in 1451, the ancient Byzantine Empire had shrunk to little more than the city of Constantinople itself. The city too might easily have fallen before, had the Turks been more persistently bent on its conquest, or less occupied with their foes on the Danube and in Asia. But now

Peril of Constantinople.

[1] Gibbon, p. 202.

the hour of reckoning was at hand. Nothing could save the city from the great military power that was encompassing it, unless the Crusades could be revived and a great fleet and army come from western Europe. But the still loosely organized states of Europe were busy with their own affairs, and the Roman (or Latin) Church had little sympathy with the Greek.

The Greek and Latin Churches.

The Christian Church, as it existed at Constantinople, did not differ from the Roman Church in doctrine, but rather in discipline and in organization. The Roman Church was in the later Middle Ages knit more or less firmly together under the supreme authority of the Pope; the clergy were unmarried. In the Greek Church the Patriarch of Constantinople had not the regal authority of the Pope of Rome over bishops and abbots. He was more like an archbishop, *primus inter pares*, as the Bishop of Rome was in the later Roman Empire. The discipline of the Greek Church was different too: secular priests were always married men, although the monks were celibate. At the Holy Communion the Greeks used leavened bread. In doctrine there was little difference; the Roman creed says the Holy Ghost 'proceedeth from the Father and the Son', the Greek Church does not use the words '*and the Son*'; this is the substance of the famous controversy over the *Filioque*. The differences are not very pronounced, and even now the Roman Church regards the Greek as being only 'in schism', not 'in heresy'.

A reconciliation of the two Churches was necessary as a preliminary to any whole-hearted support of the Byzantine Empire against the Turks. The Pope concerned with this question was Eugenius IV, of the Venetian merchant family of Condulmieri. Eugenius, who succeeded Martin V on March 6, 1431, was an

austere monk of the Celestine Order, and intolerant of heresy. When he was made Pope a General Council had already been summoned to meet at Bâle by his predecessor Martin V. The Council met on July 23, 1431, and immediately set about reforming the Church, asserting the claims of the prelates and learned doctors in full conclave to be above the Papacy. This great controversy, always present, though often glossed over in silence till the great Vatican Council of 1870, was now to go through one of its critical stages. On December 18, 1431, Eugenius issued a Bull from Rome declaring the Council to be dissolved. The Council replied by summoning the Pope to appear before them. Naturally, Eugenius did not come and the question remained undecided. In 1433 (December) the Pope compromised by taking the Council under his wing, and declaring it to be regular and 'oecumenical', and then he summoned a fresh council to meet at Ferrara. It was here that the question of reconciliation with the Greek Church was to be taken in hand.

Council of Bâle.

The Council of Bâle had already on its own authority invited the Emperor John Palaeologus VI to send deputies from the Greek Church, but it was the invitation of Pope Eugenius that was accepted. Towards the end of the year 1437 the Byzantine Emperor himself, the Patriarch of Constantinople, twenty bishops, and deputies of the Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem sailed through the straits of Gallipoli, and arrived at Venice, after a voyage which is said to have lasted seventy-seven days. In March 1438 they appeared in Ferrara. The assembly was a very meagre one: only five archbishops, eighteen bishops, ten abbots were at Ferrara to represent the Universal Church. Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, lent his presence for a time, but there were no

Council of Ferrara.

monarchs. Such an exiguous synod was not likely to effect any real or durable union with the suspicious and home-sick Greek prelates. John Palaeologus spent six months pleasantly enough, hunting on the estates of the Marquis of Este round Ferrara. Then plague broke out and the Council was removed to Florence.

Dispute with the Council of Bâle.

Meanwhile, at Bâle, the old Council summoned by the late Pope Martin V had never dissolved itself: the battle over papal supremacy had broken out again. In vain did Eugenius declare it dissolved and the fathers there—mainly French and Germans by that time—excommunicated. The Council of Bâle replied on June 25, 1439, by declaring Eugenius himself to be deposed, and by electing an anti-pope, no less a person than Amadeus VIII, Duke of Savoy, who took the title of Felix V. But the

1439.

Council of Florence had done its work. On June 2 a treaty was signed between Pope and Emperor, by which temporal help—twenty galleys from the Pope and his best efforts to organize a Crusade—was promised. A few days later the spiritual treaty was signed; the Greek and Roman Churches were declared united in one communion. The concessions necessary for such a union were practically all made on the part of the Greeks, their own need being most pressing. The *Filioque* was to be inserted in the Creed: each Church could use leavened or unleavened bread, according to its custom; Purgatory (another point of difference) was admitted to be a stage in the condition of those who die in less than mortal sin; the Pope was declared to have a primacy and government over the whole Catholic Church.

Union of Greek and Latin Churches.

This union with the Greek Church, short though its duration proved to be, was a real triumph for Eugenius. It might, with better fortune, have grown into something permanent. It showed him honestly anxious for the

good of Christendom, for unity, and for the repelling of Islam. His prestige rose, and that of the still sitting and obstinate Council of Bâle declined. The Roman Church was in schism again, with Eugenius Pope at Rome and Felix anti-pope at Bâle. The anti-pope had no authority. His son (for he was not in Holy Orders when he was elected Pope) ruled his Duchy of Savoy for him. In 1451 Felix died at Geneva.

The Union is unsuccessful.

When the Emperor John Palaeologus landed again with his retinue of bishops at Constantinople he was received with murmuring and discontent. Ever since the cruel and treacherous though temporary conquest of Constantinople in 1204 by the Latin Crusaders the Latin Church had been hated throughout Byzantium. The people of Constantinople now therefore refused to accept the union. Pope Eugenius on his side kept to the bargain, gave up his revenues to the cause, laboured to arouse a cold indifferent Western Europe to a new Crusade. But the ages of faith were past. Only the young Ladislaus VI, King of Poland and Hungary, took up the cause which was the immediate interest of his kingdoms, as well as his Christian duty. In 1443 Ladislaus and his heroic general John Hunyadi made a successful campaign against the Turks; but next year, attempting to march round the western shore of the Black Sea to Constantinople, the Hungarian forces were met and routed at Varna by the Sultan Murad. Ladislaus was killed, but Hunyadi escaped, to become the bulwark of Christendom after the fall of Constantinople.

Scanderbeg.

The fall of the city, however, was delayed by another hero, Scanderbeg. George Castriot was the son of an Albanian chief, who was forced to surrender his four sons as a pledge to the Turks. The three elder died, but the fourth grew up and became a great soldier in

the Ottoman service and gained the name of Scanderbeg, Lord Alexander. In 1443 he broke away and fled to Albania, where the people rose as one man, and for twenty-three years Scanderbeg and his Albanians, aided now and then by adventurous strangers from the West, maintained their freedom. In his castle and walled town of Croya he ruled like an independent monarch, just as three hundred and fifty years later did Ali Pasha among the Albanian hills at Janina. In 1466 Scanderbeg is believed to have been overcome, and to have fled to Venetian territory, where he died.

The preparations of Mohammed II.

In 1453, April 6, the siege of Constantinople began. The young Sultan, Mohammed II, cruel, licentious, and perfidious, but an able soldier, had begun in 1451 by building a fort, Asomaton it was called, on the European side of the Bosporus, within five miles of the city itself. 'The Empire of Constantinople', said Mohammed, 'is measured by its walls.' Indeed it was just larger than that. There were still peasants who tilled the fields outside the city, and collisions occurred with the Turkish soldiers building Asomaton. The fort was completed and the Bosporus was closed. The Dardanelles, however, were still open, and through them succour could come from Europe. By the spring of 1453 the preparations of Mohammed were complete. His regular forces, Janissaries and others, numbered 60,000: the militia from various provinces brought the total perhaps up to 250,000 men. But the great strength of the Turkish forces was in their artillery. Mohammed had hired the services of a foreign engineer, who had formerly been in the Greek service, and under him, it was said, the foundry at Adrianople turned out a cannon casting a shot of 600 lb. over a distance of one mile. Sixteen batteries in all, though not of guns so large as this monster piece, were ready by

March 1453 to batter the ancient and crumbling walls of Constantinople.

Constantine Palaeologus, the last Christian ruler of the ancient Roman Empire which had preserved the

Constantine Palaeologus.

name and dignity of Roman Emperor since the twin-capital in Italy had ceased to rule half the ancient world, was a man worthy of his high station. 'My trust is in God alone,' he replied to the threats of Mohammed; 'if it should please Him to mollify your heart, I shall rejoice in the happy change; if he delivers the city into your

hands, I submit without a murmur to His holy will. But until the Judge of the earth shall pronounce between us, it is my duty to live and die in the defence of my people.'

The defence of Constantinople.

The Sea of Marmara and the Golden Horn make Constantinople impregnable to an army on two sides. On the third or land side the city was about six miles broad, defended by two walls and a ditch of about one hundred feet in depth. The population was about 100,000, but only 4,000 soldiers, it was said, could be found among the number. A noble Genoese, Giustiniani, had brought 2,000 troops to the assistance of the doomed city, and these, with what untrained militia could be raised from the debased and servile population, formed all the forces at the disposal of Constantine Palaeologus for the defence
1453. of his empire-city. Yet from the opening of the siege on April 6, for fifty days, the defence never wavered. All the devices of ancient and more modern warfare were employed by the assailants; to the cannon, which now begin to be noticed really prominently in siege-work, were added the catapults and *ballistae*, the stone-throwers, battering-rams, and moving towers, used since Caesar's time. But the firmness of the defence checked all the efforts of the besiegers. The moving tower was burned, the ditch, which the Turks filled up by day, was cleared by night. Mines were countermined, and the open assaults on the wall were driven off with slaughter. Towards the end of April five great galleys, one of the Emperor and four chartered from the Genoese before the siege, sailed through the Dardanelles, and after a prolonged fight with the light Turkish ships, computed at about 300 vessels, sailed along the Bosporus, and were admitted through the boom which blocked the harbour of Constantinople. They brought a welcome reinforce-

ment of men and supplies. No other help arrived from Europe.

The resources of Mohammed's Empire were infinite. He could not break the boom of the Golden Horn, but he could have his fleet transported over the land, ten miles of hill and broken ground, and launched upon the harbour. A platform of oily planks was made: the light galleys were put on rollers, and about 160 vessels in all were transported overland to the Golden Horn. Constantinople could then be attacked from this side, as well as on its broad northern wall. The great assault was fixed for May 29. On the evening of the 28th the Emperor assembled his officers for counsel and farewell. The Turks in the Golden Horn.

'The last speech of Palaeologus was the funeral oration of the Roman empire: he promised, he conjured, and he vainly attempted to infuse the hope which was extinguished in his own mind. In this world all was comfortless and gloomy; and neither the gospel nor the church have proposed any conspicuous recompense to the heroes who fall in the service of their country. But the example of their prince, and the confinement of a siege, had armed these warriors with the courage of despair; and the pathetic scene is described by the experience of the historian Phranza, who was himself present at the mournful assembly. They wept, they embraced; regardless of their families and fortunes, they devoted their lives; and each commander, departing to his station, maintained all night a vigilant and anxious watch on the rampart. The Emperor and some faithful companions entered the dome of St. Sophia, which in a few hours was to be converted into a mosch, and devoutly received with tears and prayers, the sacrament of the holy communion. He reposed some moments in the palace, which resounded with cries and lamentations; solicited the pardon of all whom he might have injured; and mounted on horseback to visit the guards, and

explore the motions of the enemy. The distress and fall of the last Constantine are more glorious than the long prosperity of the Byzantine Caesars.'[1]

The last assault.

The great assault was made at dawn the following day. Simultaneous attacks were made all along the north wall and from the Golden Horn. The defenders resisted nobly till the Genoese Giovanni Giustiniani was wounded in the hand. He retired to a Greek ship, lying by the city in the Golden Horn, to have the wound dressed; it proved to be mortal, however, and he died within a few days. The spirits of the defenders fell with the retirement of this leader, the wall was scaled, and in the *mêlée* 'the Emperor, who had accomplished all the duties of a general and a soldier, was long seen and finally lost'.[2] Multitudes of the population fled to St. Sophia and the other churches and barred the doors. The Turks broke down the doors and made prisoner the unresisting people. Sixty thousand are said to have been taken captive and sold or kept as slaves. Some were ransomed later, like the historian Phranza, who lived to tell the tale. The wealth of the city was plundered, its noble libraries destroyed or dispersed. One hundred and sixty thousand manuscripts, priceless works of literature, among them perhaps the missing books of Livy or Tacitus, or the poems of Bacchylides, are computed to have been destroyed.

The fall of Trebizond.

When Constantinople fell, to be the capital of a great Turkish Empire, the little Greek Empire of Trebizond on the southern shore of the Black Sea could no longer be tolerated. In 1461 it surrendered unconditionally to Mohammed II.

Connexion between

The fall of Constantinople is sometimes given as one of the causes of the Renaissance in Western Europe, but

[1] Gibbon, chap. lxvi. [2] Gibbon, loc. cit.

there are no good reasons for such a statement. Very few Greek scholars can have escaped from the city when it fell, nor are any important classical manuscripts known to have been rescued from the sack. The exodus of Greek learning had been going on long before the city fell, and was no doubt accelerated by the prospect of its conquest.

the fall of Constantinople and the Revival of Learning.

The learning of Mediaeval Europe was great, but had definite limits. Something of ancient Greek thought had come in through Arabic translations, but the culture of the Middle Ages as a whole was pre-eminently Latin. It gained greatly in beauty and elasticity with the spread of Greek learning, and with a more scholarly method of treating manuscripts, Latin as well as Greek. This new Greek learning appeared in Italy before the end of the fourteenth century. In Calabria, in the towns originally planted by Greek colonists some hundreds of years before Christ, something of the Greek tongue continued to survive, and some memory of its literature. Petrarch possessed a copy of Homer, a present from Byzantium, but to him Homer was dumb: 'Homer is dumb, or I am deaf; nor is it in my power to enjoy the beauty which I possess.' Boccaccio was more fortunate, and is given by Gibbon the credit of restoring to Italy the study of the Greek language. In 1360 Boccaccio procured from the Republic of Florence a pension for Leo Pilatus, a Calabrian, who became the first professor of Greek in that city and in Western Europe. If Leo was not a success in Florence (he only stayed three years) he produced at any rate one real Greek scholar, for it was under him that Boccaccio translated the *Odyssey* into Latin. Yet if any one moment is to be taken as the beginning of the Revival of Learning, it is the year 1395, when Manuel Chrysoloras began teaching Greek con-

Greek studies in the later Middle Ages.

tinuously in Florence. Chrysoloras was a noble-born Greek of Constantinople, one of the best types which that city produced. Equally versed in the arts of government and of language, he was sent by the Emperor Manuel II on an embassy to the courts of Italy in 1393. While there he was persuaded to accept the position of Professor of Greek in the University of Florence; and there, and later in Padua and Rome, this accomplished scholar taught both in Latin and in Greek, spreading the knowledge of classical literature and the love of scholarship, till his death at the Council of Constance in 1415.

Poggio.

Gian Francesco Poggio Bracciolini was a Florentine, born at Terranuova in 1380. The inhabitants of the territory but not of the city of Florence did not rank as citizens by birth, and it was not till 1452 that Poggio, though one of the most eminent scholars of his time, was admitted to the civic privileges.

He studied in the University of Florence, and learned Greek under Manuel Chrysoloras. Through the influence of the Florentine scholars who recognized his worth he was recommended to the papal court, and became one of the Pope's secretaries. In discharge of his duties in this position he came into communication with many people and places, and lost no opportunity of adding to his knowledge of the classics. His great service to scholarship was in diligently seeking out in the dusty shelves and muniment chests of unused monastic libraries the manuscripts of classical literature which might otherwise have perished with the lapse of time. When his duties as secretary took Poggio to Constance, in 1414, during the great Council which was sitting there, he spent all his leisure in visiting the ancient rich monasteries within reach, Reichenau, St. Gall, and others,

where manuscripts had lain unread since the time of Charlemagne. The romance of the discovery of classical manuscripts is in its own way as great as that of the discovery of new lands: and in those libraries, of which their own unlearned monks knew so little, the diligent inquirer might at any moment light upon the most priceless finds. In 1345 Petrarch had added, as it were, a new continent to literature, with inexhaustible sources of wholesome pleasure and instruction to mankind, when he lighted upon the manuscript of Cicero's Letters to Atticus, at Verona; so also Poggio, in his journeys round Constance, discovered new realms of wisdom of the same master, speeches of Cicero in manuscript, *pro Sexto*, *pro Murena*, *pro Caecina*, and others. The unknown treasures of the libraries of Swabia and Switzerland were searched, and the works of the great past were made accessible to mankind. Poggio, who was a layman though in the service of the Pope, died in his villa near Florence in 1459. The industry of the Renaissance scholars is amazing. Besides the labour of searching through libraries, reading, and copying, he was himself the author of very many works, written in the Latin tongue, including a History of Florence after the manner of Livy.

Valla.

The Renaissance, the Revival of Learning, was thus, it may be seen, going on long before Constantinople fell, nor moreover, was the Renaissance due to Greek scholarship more than to Latin. Greek scholarship was of the highest importance, yet Poggio was primarily a Latinist, as was also Laurentius Valla. Valla is of great account in the history of the Revival of Learning, not as a discoverer of manuscripts like Poggio, but as the originator of exact scholarship in modern times, accurate, scientific criticism of the authenticity, style,

composition of any work. Lorenzo, or Laurentius Valla,
1406–57. was a Roman, born in 1406, and spent his life as a travelling scholar, opening his lecture-room in one city after another, always writing and disputing to the end of his life. Although in priest's orders, the essentially secular or 'profane' character of the Renaissance appears in him. Every problem was approached by him merely from the scholar's and the artist's point of view. With him the veneration attached to a work was nothing, its accuracy must be established or at all costs disproved. The 'Donation of Constantine',[1] for instance, by which the Roman Emperor was supposed to have granted to the Papacy the temporal dominion of Italy, was by Valla's careful analysis shown to be a forgery of the eighth (or ninth) century. His treatise *De Voluptate*, which treated of pleasure as a reasonable thing without any moral or religious considerations, was as offensive to the rules of the Mediaeval Church as was his candid criticism of their cherished documents. Pope Eugenius IV was severe enough against him, but when Nicholas V made Valla a papal secretary the Church concluded its peace with the Renaissance and humanism had triumphed 'over orthodoxy and tradition'. The era of the worldly popes was at hand, when an abandonment to the ideals of art alone without sincere religion was to provoke the reaction known as the Reformation.

With the capture of Constantinople in 1453 Islam made its greatest advance against Christendom. Little more than a generation was to bring, at the other end of Europe, a striking decline. This was the conquest of Granada, the Moorish kingdom in Spain, by the forces of Castile and Aragon.

[1] Constantine the Great reigned A.D. 323–37.

Spain was almost completely overrun at the beginning of the eighth century by Arabs and Saracens and Berbers, under the chief Tarik, whose name still survives in Geb-el-Tarik or Gibraltar. In the great range of mountains, however, which run along the whole of Spain from east to west, the Pyrenees and Cantabrian mountains, the descendants of the Visigoths managed to preserve their independence, and by the beginning of the thirteenth century three fairly compact kingdoms had grown up, Leon,[1] Castile, Aragon, to the west and east of the Iberian range, besides the small kingdom of Navarre, on the western end of the Pyrenees, half Spanish, half French. Under Ferdinand III of Castile, Leon and Castile were united, and all the Moorish powers conquered except the region of Granada, the extreme south of the Peninsula including Cadiz. Portugal had for long a history of its own. Part of the land which it occupies was regained from the Moors by the kingdom of Leon in the latter half of the eleventh century, and was given as a county to Henry of Burgundy, who had come as a Crusader to Spain. Henry married one of the daughters of the King of Leon, and founded the independent line of Portugal. His son, Alphonso I, with the help of English Crusaders, captured Lisbon from the Moors in 1147, and completed the consolidation of the kingdom.

The rise of the Spanish kingdoms.

1217–52.

Portugal.

1055–64.

The history of Castile in the fourteenth and for a great part of the fifteenth centuries is not so much of general interest in European as in Peninsular history. The attempt of Edward, the Black Prince, of England to keep on the throne the tyrant Pedro the Cruel, threw Castile on to the French side in the first half of the Hundred Years War.

Castile.

1350–68.

[1] Leon became united with Castile in 1230.

Pedro's rival, Henry of Trastamara, established the reigning line of Castile, though his claim was disputed by the English prince John of Gaunt, who had married Pedro's eldest daughter. John bears the empty title of King of Castile in the contemporary English chronicles. In the end he made up his quarrel with Henry of Trastamara; John's daughter Constance married Henry's grandson, so that through this Lancastrian princess the royal line of Castile was continued.

Ferdinand and Isabella.

Till 1474 the history of Castile is almost purely local, but with the accession of Isabella 'the Catholic' in that year its history becomes European. Already, in 1469, she had married her cousin Ferdinand, the son of John II of Aragon. When John died in 1479 the two kingdoms, which geography, race, history, and language had for so long been drawing closer to each other, became united.

The two sovereigns first undertook the task of consolidating their dominions, and then Ferdinand proceeded to intervene in the theatre of Europe, thus beginning for Spain a long series of wars, which, after she had passed from Habsburgs to Bourbons, ended in her economic and intellectual bankruptcy. The year 1492 may be taken as completing the internal consolidation of Spain, and beginning her great expansion. For in that year Granada was conquered, and Columbus discovered the New World.

The Spanish Inquisition.

In 1479 Ferdinand and Isabella obtained from Pope Sixtus IV a bull giving them authority to appoint three inquisitors. Thus was established the famous Spanish Inquisition (as distinct from Papal and Episcopal Inquisitions which had existed before), entirely under the royal authority. It was used to keep the people strictly orthodox and strictly subject to the crown. Jews and Moors were converted, or expelled from the country.

The hands of the King wielded the sword of the State, and the equally effective sword of the Church. The chief agent of the royal power was the fanatic Thomas Torquemada, the confessor of Ferdinand and Isabella, and Inquisitor-General from 1481. The Inquisition was a terrible weapon against any one, owing to its secrecy and its implacability, but there is no evidence that its tortures were worse than those of the civil tribunals. The monstrous character of its régime lies in the fact that its tortures and punishment were inflicted for offences, many of which were not moral offences at all, and which no civil tribunal would have condemned.

Granada.

It was not enough to root out heresy within the kingdom of Castile and Aragon. The last Moorish principality must be overthrown. In some ways the conquest of Granada has striking resemblances to the conquest of Constantinople. If the Spaniards were greatly superior to the Turks, the Byzantines were certainly not so greatly superior to the Moors. Granada was a home of art, learning, commerce. Her trade in silk was thriving, her graceful palaces, the Alhambra, for instance, bear witness to her high development in art; in her schools the science of geography, which had almost died in the later Middle Ages, was kept alive. Granada in fact was like a flourishing and progressive Italian city, except that the tone of its civilization was Oriental.

Conquest of Granada.

It was like the great mediaeval republics in another respect also, in being divided by factions. Out of such disputes the foreigner can always take his profit. In 1482 the great Moorish families of the city were disputing with each other, and the sovereign, Muley Hassan, was deposed by his own son Boabdil. Meanwhile Ferdinand and Isabella were every year pushing forward their

frontier. In vain was the more warlike Muley Hassan recalled to power to reorganize the defence. The forces of Spain were too strong. The war was long, for the nature of the country was difficult ; treaties and tributes delayed the inevitable annexation. In 1491 Boabdil was compelled to sign away his kingdom. On January 2, 1492, the city of Granada was surrendered.

CHAPTER XII

THE EMPIRE, FRANCE, AND ITALY, IN THE LAST HALF OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

THE Emperor Sigismund, the last of the great House of Luxemburg, died in 1437, having taken all necessary precautions to secure the succession to his dominions of Albert of Austria, his son-in-law. Albert was forty-one years old, tall, well built, capable. His reign, however, only lasted two years, for he died in 1439 of a fever caught in campaigning against the Turks, who had invaded Hungary. A son, Ladislaus, born after his death, succeeded to Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, under the guardianship of his father's cousin, Frederick of Styria. Frederick, as a grown man and a considerable territorial prince, was elected King of the Romans in February 1440. Young Ladislaus enjoyed a somewhat troubled possession of Bohemia, Austria and Hungary (Hungary was partly, till 1444, in the hands of the Polish Ladislaus I) till his death at the age of eighteen in 1457. The Bohemian crown then went by election to an able and influential Bohemian, George Podiebrad, and after him to Prince Ladislaus of Poland. Hungary from 1458 till 1490 was under the great native House of Corvinus (founded by John Hunyadi); after 1490 it was united with Bohemia under Ladislaus. In 1526 Louis, the son of Ladislaus, the last of the Polish princes in Hungary and Bohemia, died in fighting the Turks at the battle of Mohacs, and the two kingdoms were secured by the House of

Albert II.

Hungary and Bohemia.

Frederick III.

Habsburg. Frederick III did not live to see this. He himself was only Archduke of Austria (and even for this he had to fight), and lord of some other South German dependencies of his House. In addition he had the very limited power in Germany of King of the Romans and Emperor. Yet with him, inactive and rather futile as he was, begins the modern greatness of the House of Habsburg. With him the 'happy' method of gaining vast territories by marriage becomes startlingly prominent. When he died his house had definitely become an imperial house, and within little over thirty years of his death the head of the House of Habsburg was ruling over Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, the Netherlands, Spain, and the north of Italy—almost the whole of Western Europe outside France.

In appearance Frederick III was every inch a king. He was tall, strong in limb and body, with well-marked features, like nearly all members of his house. He dressed plainly, but with perfect neatness. On great occasions he knew how to assume all the splendour and state due to the majesty of an Emperor and to the solemnity of his duties. He was religious, self-controlled, and is specially noticed for his abstinence in the use of wine, which he always took mixed with water. His tastes were studious and sedentary rather than military, and like other princes since he was greatly interested in science. But it was not the science of a Galileo, which pierces through ignorance and superstition into truth: Frederick's mind was still turned backwards, to the debased pursuit of astrology, which had long since ceased to cull any flowers of truth for mankind. His courtiers doubtless flattered his ability:

'With astrologers and alchymists, he penetrated into the hidden and mysterious majesty of nature. Instructed

by them, he not only developed the planetary motions, but learned the combination and influence of fortunate stars; and comprehended and predicted the most sublime things. So great was his proficiency in alchemy, that by adding colours to common pebbles, he seemed to transform them into diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires; he transmuted quicksilver into gold, and from a few drops of water procured a specific for many diseases.'[1]

He must have given a great deal of thought to composing his famous anagram on the glories of Austria: A E I O U. This was engraved on all his plates, printed on all his books, baffling the wits of his complaisant courtiers; but after his death the solution of the puzzle was found on a paper written with his own hand:

Austriae Est Imperare Orbi Universo
Alles Erdreich ist Oesterreich Unterthan[2]

Growth and influence of the House of Austria.

He was not unsuccessful as a ruler in Austria, although as Emperor he counted for very little. His chief success, however, lay in giving scope to the energy of his remarkable son Maximilian, who in 1487, after the Hungarians had driven the Emperor from Vienna, was successful in driving them out of Austria again, and in restoring the great position of his family. Frederick himself as Emperor had in 1453 raised Austria to the dignity of an Archduchy. As his life drew to a close the separate portions of the great Austrian inheritance were all falling to the line of Frederick, and the marriage of his son Maximilian with Mary of Burgundy was to make the prophecy contained in the anagram of the feeble old Emperor almost come true.

The Councils.

When Frederick became Emperor he had to face the problem offered by a schism in the Papacy. The Council

[1] Grundeck, in Coxe, *House of Austria*, i. 384.

[2] 'To Austria belongs the Empire of the whole world. The whole earthly realm is subject to Austria.'

of Bâle had been summoned by Martin V, and had sat under the protection of Sigismund. Eugenius IV had declared it dissolved, and had assembled a General Council of his own, at Florence and then at Ferrara. The Council of Bâle had replied by declaring Pope Eugenius to be deposed, and by electing as anti-pope the Duke of Savoy, though a layman. The German princes were inclined to recognize this second pope, Felix V, who was elected by a predominantly German Council.

Aeneas Sylvius.

Frederick's private secretary after 1442 was Enea Silvio Piccolomini, a talented and supple Italian, who was very useful as a diplomatist to the Emperor. Aeneas Sylvius, as he called himself in his Latin writings, had one of the most varied and romantic careers in history.

1405.

Although born of a noble family near Siena, he was a sheer adventurer. His father's land was simply a farm, and as eighteen children had to be provided for Aeneas Sylvius had to look for his career in the great world. At Siena he studied hard and became an accomplished scholar, and to the end of his life, in spite of his self-indulgence and love of pleasure, the industry of Aeneas Sylvius was never doubted. In 1431 the Bishop of Fermo took him as private secretary to the Council of Bâle, and thus Aeneas Sylvius was introduced to high life in Germany. Gradually his influence increased, and by the year 1438, when the contest between the Council and Eugenius IV was at its height, the personality of the layman Aeneas Sylvius had the greatest weight among the fathers at Bâle. It was his skilful management that procured the act of deposition of Eugenius IV and the election of Amadeus of Savoy, 'Felix V'. Aeneas then became the secretary of Felix. In 1442, as delegate from the Council of Bâle to the Diet, Aeneas attracted the notice of Frederick III, and, with his usual ease in changing from

post to post when a better prospect was offered, became the Emperor's secretary.

At this point the extraordinary sagacity and astuteness of Aeneas Sylvius become more apparent than ever. Germany was schismatic: Frederick III at any rate was inclined to support Felix V. Aeneas himself had done more than any one to bring about the election of Felix. But now he saw that the schism was a failure and that the Roman line was the one to support. He induced the Emperor and Electors to withdraw their support from Felix V, and he had himself sufficient confidence to take the announcement of this event to Eugenius IV at the beginning of the year 1447. Eugenius died in February 1447, and the learned and cultivated Tomaso da Sarzana, Cardinal of Santa Susanna, was elected Pope, and took the name of Nicholas V. Aeneas Sylvius, with his unerring faculty of getting to know the right people, became a firm friend of Nicholas, and helped to negotiate with Frederick III the important Concordat of Vienna (or Aschaffenburg), by which the Empire renounced the decrees of the Council of Bâle which had limited the papal power (forbidding the payment of annates and the reservation of benefices for nominees of the Pope). Next year Felix V resigned, and retired to the peaceful life of a Cardinal. The Council of Bâle—then sitting at Lausanne—(there was very little of it left) recognized Nicholas as lawful Pope, and dissolved itself. Germany returned into allegiance to the Roman papacy, and gave up reforming for another seventy years. Aeneas Sylvius, who had at last taken Holy Orders in 1446, had got beyond being secretary to the Emperor. He became a Cardinal, a Prince of the Empire, and finally, in 1458, Pope. Considering himself, like Vergil's hero, a 'Pius Aeneas', he took the name of Pius II.

Feb. 17, 1448.

For the rest of the reign of Frederick III—he died on August 19, 1493, aged 78, after a reign of fifty-three years—the condition of Germany, outside the cities, was one of confusion. The armed bands, which the Hundred Years War produced in France, and which became such a public nuisance there, appeared also in South Germany. In 1444, after the Truce between France and England, Frederick brought a French force to attack the Swiss, from whom he still hoped to regain the power which previous Habsburgs had wielded. The French were defeated at St. James on the Birs, and gave up the war. But their companies remained in Swabia and Alsace, and before they could be expelled contrived to inflict upon the country-side the miseries incidental to a visit from the *écorcheurs*.

Private wars.

Private warfare became almost the normal condition of German life; cities and nobles and bishops alike took a hand in it. The greatest private wars are connected with the families of Saxony, Brandenburg, Burgundy.

Saxony.

The historic House of Wettin, which has representatives on the thrones of Great Britain, Belgium, Bulgaria, and (till 1908) Portugal—not to mention the kingdom of Saxony, the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg, and other sovereign Duchies—took its name from the county and castle of Wettin, in the valley of the river Saale. The district of Wettin now belongs to Prussia, the Prussian ruling family of Hohenzollern having in the last two hundred years eclipsed the Wettins in Germany.

In 1423 the Emperor Sigismund had made Frederick Margrave of Meissen, the head of the House of Wettin, Duke of Saxe-Wittenberg, with the title and dignities of Elector of the Holy Roman Empire. His territories included Meissen, Thuringia, and Saxe-Wittenberg. He died in 1428, and divided his territories between his

sons Frederick the Gentle and William; Frederick got Wittenberg and Meissen, and William Thuringia. When the young men grew up a fierce war broke out between them in 1455. The war was carried on not simply in the old feudal style, but with cannon and somewhat after the manner of a modern campaign. During this war a Saxon knight, Kunz von Kauffungen, managed to seize and carry off from the castle of Altenburg Ernest and Albert, the two sons of Frederick. Albert escaped, however, and then Ernest was rescued. The fratricidal war was composed in 1460, and in 1464 the two sons of Frederick succeeded to their father's duchy, which they ruled in common amicably and happily for the next twenty years, the Golden Age of Saxony. In 1482 occurred the death of their uncle William of Thuringia, childless, in whose service Kunz von Kauffungen had failed in the attempted 'rape of the Saxon princes'. Thuringia therefore came back to the line of Wittenberg. The possessions thus united were almost at once divided by the 'Partition of Leipsic': Ernest, the elder, took 1485.
Saxe-Wittenberg and Thuringia; Albert got Meissen. Thus were founded the Ernestine and Albertine stems; the Ernestine line has branched out into the dynasties of Saxe-Weimar, Saxe-Coburg, which last line has again branched out into the English, Belgian, Bulgarian, and Portuguese dynasties; the Albertine line is the present royal family of Saxony.

The house of Wettin has grown, so to speak, *extensively*, the house of Hohenzollern, *intensively*. While the Wettins divided, the Hohenzollerns united. The Wettins have more crowns in Germany, but the Hohenzollerns have the bigger kingdom. Brandenburg.

The Counts of Zollern, who administered their fief from the castle of Hohenzollern on the Upper Danube,

received the office of imperial deputy or burgrave in Nürnberg, 1190. In 1417 Count Frederick VI was made Margrave and Elector of Brandenburg by the Emperor Sigismund. The family also held Anspach and Baireuth in South Germany. Under the Emperor Frederick III the whole was held by Albert Achilles, a great warrior, a great orator, one of the most splendid figures of the time. He was however troublesome to the peace of the Empire, and engaged like other princes in private wars. The family of Wittelsbach, which ruled in Bavaria and the Palatinate, was the chief one with which he fought. If any one had asked an oracle at that time which of the four great families—the Habsburgs, Wittelsbachs, Wettins, or Hohenzollerns—would become the greatest in Germany, he would not have been surprised had the answer been, the Wittelsbachs. Albert Achilles, however, who was a strong ruler in Brandenburg,

February. by the *Depositio Achillea* in 1473 made an important law for the House of Hohenzollern, namely, that Brandenburg was to pass always, undivided, to the eldest son.

Burgundy. The Houses of Brandenburg, Saxony, Bavaria, turbulent and assertive of their independence though they might be, never aimed in this period at becoming kings, outside the Empire. The House of Burgundy was more ambitious, and the reign of the Emperor Frederick III nearly witnessed the establishment (or re-establishment) of a great Middle Kingdom, which should extend in a broad fertile belt from the Netherlands through Lorraine, Alsace, to the mountains of Switzerland, and which would effectually isolate Germany from France.

Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, is sometimes called the last representative of feudalism. Yet his face was not entirely turned towards the past; his scheme of building up the Middle Kingdom has something very

modern about it: his territories were to be combined on rational principles, and were to be secured from external interference by the equilibrium that could be maintained between France and Germany.

Expansion of Burgundy.

The House of Burgundy possessed enormous territories, but they were all subject, feudally, either to France or to the Empire. John the Good of France gave the Duchy of Burgundy to his fourth son Philip the Bold in 1363. Marriage with Margaret of Flanders gave Philip Flanders, and also Franche Comté, Artois, Malines, Antwerp, Nevers, and Rethel. In 1384, the year in which these counties fell in at the death of his father-in-law, Philip purchased the county of Charolais. His son was John the Fearless, whose feud with the Armagnac party caused such ills to France. John was murdered at the bridge of Montereau in 1419, and was succeeded by Philip the Good, who was allied with the English till 1435. In that year he made peace with Charles VII of France, in negotiations at Arras in which the ubiquitous Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini took a part. Philip received from Charles VII the countships of Macon, Ponthieu, Auxerre, Bar-sur-Seine, and the Somme towns Péronne, St. Quentin, Roye, Montdidier. He was also relieved of all feudal allegiance for his life to the crown of France. In 1428 he had purchased the county of Namur, and in 1433 he became heir through his mother to Brabant and Holland. Ten years later he purchased Luxemburg.

Philip the Good.

Philip the Good lived till 1467, having shown what a prudent and capable prince could do for himself and his subjects. His territories were, in feudal law, all part of France or the Empire; the Duchy of Burgundy, for instance, was French, the Free County of Burgundy—Franche Comté—was imperial: Flanders was both in the Empire and under the French allegiance, Holland

was in the Empire; and so with his other fiefs. Yet he was probably richer than the King of France or the Holy Roman Emperor. Flanders, under his peaceful rule, was one of the greatest manufacturing countries of Europe. Burgundy was one of the finest districts for wine-growing. Dijon was his capital, and the beautiful sculptures made for the Cathedral, under his patronage, prove at once his good taste and his resources. His territories were populous and wealthy, the people noted for their intelligence. Flanders, Brabant, Holland had hardy, independent peoples, distinguished in practically every walk of life. The new art of painting in oils upon canvas was being brought to a high state of development by the brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck in Ghent, Lille, and Bruges. The people of Burgundy, French in their civilization, had played a great part in the history of the Mediaeval Church. Philip the Good gave them a university at Dôle, to be a centre of higher education under the Burgundian Dukes to whom the town was so loyal.

Charles the Bold.

When Philip the Good died he left a son fitted in many ways to carry on his work. Charles the Bold, 'le Téméraire', as the French call him, was a man of great character, vigorous, aspiring, firm of mind, a born soldier. But the House of Burgundy had advanced more through the peaceful schemes of Duke Philip than it was to do through the bold martial plans of Charles. His ambition and his overbearing ways roused against him two forces which were to be among the leading features of modern history, the two forces of freedom and autocracy. Freedom was represented by the Swiss, autocracy by Louis XI of France. Yet Charles had not much to gain from France: it would be enough if he could keep what he had. From the Empire he had much to gain: territory, to link up his scattered dominions, and a crown,

so as to stand, in law, independent, equal to his neighbour and overlord, the King of France.

The first part of Charles's active life was spent in contests with Louis XI. Till 1471 the contest was indecisive, but after that year Charles's attention was absorbed in his efforts to gain lands and a crown in the Empire, so that Louis XI was able quietly to pursue his own devices. In his dealings with the Empire Charles was at first quite successful. Although a headlong soldier, Charles was by no means blind to the arts of government. His dominions were carefully administered, and his treasury was full. Thus he could take advantage when an opportunity offered. In 1469 he bought from Sigismund of Habsburg, the cousin of Frederick III, the Landgraviate of Alsace. He kept his court like a king, and had a fine army, recruited from his own dominions and from mercenaries, Italians, English, and others. In 1473 he was negotiating with Frederick III for a crown: for the Empire, being in theory the superior of all princes, could grant any title and status. A splendid offer was made to Frederick: Charles would give his only child Mary in marriage to Frederick's son Maximilian. The enormous Burgundian inheritance, which now stretched almost unbroken from the Alps to the North Sea, would be added to the House of Habsburg.

Charles the Bold and Frederick III, 1473.

The offer was accepted. In September Charles went to Trèves, and prepared a throne for his coronation in the stately Cathedral. Frederick came too, but changed his mind before the coronation could take place, and abruptly left the city, alleging that he had to go to Cologne to adjust a difference between the Archbishop and Chapter. It is believed that Frederick, never very enamoured of making Charles a king, had been brought to a decision to avoid the coronation by pressure from

Louis XI. It was noticed also that Charles had borne himself very grandly at Trèves, and Frederick, in spite of his plain ways was, like all the Habsburgs, a very proud man.

The decline of the power of Charles.

Charles was baulked but not defeated. The Archbishop of Cologne was troubled with rebellious subjects, so Charles took an army into the electorate and besieged Neuss in support of the Archbishop. Frederick III, however, could not allow the Duke of Burgundy to establish himself on the Rhine. When the siege had lasted ten months Frederick began to draw near with an army, and Charles withdrew, more particularly as he had promised to join Edward IV of England (whose sister Margaret he had married in 1468) in an invasion of France. Louis XI, however, was prepared for this, and bought off Edward at the Treaty of Picquigny on the Somme, in August 1475. But Charles was indomitable. In November he collected his mercenary foot and artillerymen, and invaded Lorraine. This Duchy was, like Burgundy, under a cadet branch of the French royal house; but Charles had some sort of claim, and he now seized the capital Nancy. A revolt in Alsace, however, called him away, and he marched right down to the Jura mountains, for the Swiss had been helping the Alsatian towns which revolted against the acts of Charles's governor. On March 2, 1476, he was defeated outside the castle of Granson (whose garrison he had massacred) by the Confederates of Berne, Friburg, and Schwyz. Charles had to fly and the Swiss captured all his artillery. He retained control of Lausanne, and from there was marching on Berne with 30,000 men in 1476, stopping to besiege Morat on the way on June 9. The Swiss Confederates, helped by René, Duke of Lorraine, came up to the relief. Charles's camp was stormed amid driving rain,

July 1474–June 1475.

June 22, 1476.

and his army dispersed. The result of the battle of Morat was that Charles's scheme of basing his Middle Kingdom upon the Swiss mountains was ruined. At the same time he lost Lorraine too. René recovered Nancy. Charles got another army together to besiege it, but the Swiss now came to help René as he had helped them at Morat. He was still besieging Nancy in January 1477, with an army reduced to a few thousand men, when René, with his Lorrainers and the Swiss, overwhelmed him on the 5th. Charles himself perished on the field, and the design of a Middle Kingdom came to nothing. The idea in a modified form was revived in the united kingdom of Holland and Belgium, which lasted from 1815 to 1830. In many respects it seems a pity that Charles's design failed, as France and Germany, since each have become consolidated, have not proved the best of neighbours. Yet, as Charles had no son, his design in any case would have died with him or with the marriage of his heiress. As things turned out the Burgundian inheritance, except the Duchy of Burgundy itself and some other French fiefs which Louis XI took, went to the Habsburgs, for in August 1477 Mary, his only child, the daughter of his first wife Isabella of Bourbon, gave her hand to the son of Frederick III, better known in later history as the Emperor Maximilian.

Oct. 1476.

Death.

The history of Germany in the fifteenth century is not one merely of wars and intrigues. Inside the strong towns a peaceful life was found, a certain level of art and literature was cultivated, and the wholesome pursuits of industry flourished. Aeneas Sylvius has left a highly coloured account of the beauty and richness of these towns.

'Let us run through a little the memorable cities of German name, and it will make more plain how great

is the glory of this people, its magnificence, its splendour. You find nothing in the whole of Europe more magnificent, more ornate than famous Cologne. . . . It is noble in churches and dwellings, brilliant in its wealth, roofed with lead, adorned with public buildings, fortified with towers, luxuriating in its fertile fields and the river Rhine. . . . Mainz is an ancient city, distinguished for the magnificence of its churches, its public and private buildings. There is nothing that you can find fault with in it, except the narrowness of its streets. Worms too if it is not of great size, yet no one will deny to be a most pleasant city. Strasburg is like Venice, divided with many canals, which bear ships into almost every square. . . . In Bavaria you will scarcely find a town, whose cleanness you will not greatly admire.'[1]

All German cities, even the small centres of population, in Thuringia, in the north, and in the east, had, as indeed they still have, handsome halls, and solid, pleasant private houses.

In these prosperous German towns, it must be admitted, the highest kind of literature did not flourish. The old melodies and metrical forms of the twelfth and thirteenth century Minnesinger were worked upon over and over again by the Meistersänger. The master-singers were townsmen, whose 'craft' was to make verses for singing, as another man's craft was to work in iron or wood. Though naturally imaginative and sentimental, the Germans became bound by rigid rules and conventions. In the towns the singers formed themselves into gilds, and the craft of verse and music making was carried on according to gild rules and restrictions. Between the gilds there was much fraternity: master-singers travelled from town to town, practising their profession, and gilds met frequently, for instance at the Wartburg in

[1] Aeneae Sylvii *Opera: Germaniae status descriptio*, pp. 1052–3.

Saxe-Weimar, to hold competitions in their art. Even the best of the Meistersänger, from Heinrich von Meissen, called Frauenlob, who died at Mainz in 1318, to Hans Sachs of Nürnberg, who died in 1579, had little of worth. The fifteenth century was a poor time for literature all over Europe, with the possible exception of Italy. The great literature of modern France, however, was beginning. François Villon was a real genius, free and fanciful, expressing his deep poetic emotion in lyric form. It is in the work which this loose and out-at-elbows student has left that we must look for the rise in Western Europe of lyric poetry, so expressive of mankind's yearning after the beautiful and serene.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

The new monarchs.

In the last half of the fifteenth century strong autocratic monarchies were rising in France, Spain, and England. Germany remained only a loose confederation of sovereign states, but the others took what is called the unitary form of constitution: there were no sovereign or half-sovereign powers inside the state under the Crown: there was only one Government. In Spain, it is true, Castile and Aragon still had separate forms of administration, but after the death of Isabella of Castile in 1504 her husband Ferdinand was king in both kingdoms. In the next century the Habsburg monarchs of Spain completed the process of unification. In Mediaeval France the great feudatories, the Counts of Champagne, Provence, Anjou, the Dukes of Guienne, Brittany, Burgundy, had been a check on the power of the Crown; but in 1481 Provence fell into the hands of the King. Guienne had been absorbed into the royal domain thirty years before, and the only great fiefs still outside the power of the King were Burgundy and Brittany. The Hundred Years War had, as it were, swept France clear of local authorities, and left the Crown supreme. Such was the state of affairs when Louis XI came to the throne in 1461.

Louis XI.

When Charles VII died on July 22, 1461, his son Louis, who had quarrelled with his father and had been in exile in the Burgundian dominions for five years, crossed the frontier to take possession of his throne.

The country-side had not recovered from the devastation of the Hundred Years War, and Louis was struck with the difference between the fat and fertile plains of Flanders, where he had been staying, and the ruined houses, the sterile uncultivated fields, the emaciated men and women of north-eastern France. There were great difficulties which the new king had to face: a turbulent nobility, a country still needing rest and recuperation above all things, Charles the Bold scheming to set up an independent kingdom comprising some of the fairest parts of France.

Louis XI was one of the new order of monarchs, not so much warlike, as subtle and prudent, like Ferdinand of Spain and Henry VII of England. This type of ruler had arisen among the despots of Italian cities, who had to trust to statecraft rather than might to maintain themselves among so many competing powers. Such was the type of ruler which Machiavelli so skilfully drew in his 'Prince'. Louis XI is an almost perfect anticipation of the 'Prince'.

In the pages of Sir Walter Scott's novel, *Quentin Durward*, the character of Louis XI is given in detail, and true to life. For his impressions Sir Walter Scott was dependent on the Memoirs of Philip de Comines, who himself in one compendious passage thus describes the King:

Comines's description.

'Of all the princes that I ever had the honour to know, the wisest and most dexterous to extricate himself out of any danger or difficulties in time of adversity, was our master King Louis XI. He was the humblest in his conversation and habit, and the most painful and indefatigable to win over any man to his side, that he thought capable of doing him either much mischief, or good: though he was often refused, he would never give over a man that he once undertook, but still pressed and

continued his insinuations, promising him largely and presenting him with such sums and pensions as he knew would satisfy his ambition; and for such as he had discarded in the time of peace and prosperity, he paid dear (when he had occasion for them) to recover them again; but when he had once reconciled them he retained no pique to them for what had passed, but employed them freely for the future. He was naturally kind and indulgent to persons of indifferent condition, and morose to such as he thought had no need of him. Never prince was so conversable, nor so inquisitive as he, for his desire was to know everybody he could; and indeed he knew all persons of any authority or worth in England, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, the territories of the Dukes of Burgundy and Bretagne, and in his own country; and by those qualities he preserved the crown upon his head, which was in much danger by the enemies he had created to himself, by his inadvertency upon his accession to the crown. But above all, his great bounty and liberality did him the greatest service: and yet as he behaved himself wisely in time of distress, so when he thought himself a little out of danger, though it were but a truce, he would disoblige the servants and officers of his court by mean and trifling ways, which were little to his advantage; and as for peace, he could hardly endure the thoughts of it. He spoke slightingly of most people, and rather before their faces than behind their backs, unless he was afraid of them, and of that sort there were a great many, for he was naturally timorous. When he had done himself any prejudice by his talk, or was apprehensive he should do so, to make them amends whom he had injured, he would say to the person whom he had disobliged, "I am sensible my tongue has done me a great deal of mischief; but, on the other hand, it has sometimes done me good; however, it is but reason I should make some reparation for the injury." And he never used those kind of apologies to any person, but he did something for the person to whom he made it, and it was always considerable. It is certainly a great blessing for any prince to have experienced adversity as well as prosperity, good

as well as evil, and especially if the good outweighs the evil, as it did in our master. I am of opinion that the trouble he was involved in, in his youth, when he fled from his father, and resided six years together in the Duke of Burgundy's court, was of great service to him; for there he learned to be complacent to such as he had occasion to use, which was no little improvement. As soon as his coronation was over, and he began to be a little settled in his kingdom, his mind was wholly bent upon revenge; but he quickly found the inconvenience, repented by degrees of his indiscretion and made sufficient reparations for his error, by regaining those he had injured upon very dear terms, as shall be related hereafter. Besides, I am very confident, that if his education had not been different from the usual education of such princes as I have seen in France, he could not so easily have worked himself out of his troubles . . .'

Louis's life as king was simple and devoted to government, in which he took a real, if somewhat selfish, interest. He did not aim at popularity, and was not likely to acquire any: he was not good looking, there was nothing splendid in his appearance. His clothes, in times when the garments of noblemen, especially at the Burgundian court, were coming to be of a quite wonderful splendour, were plain: he usually wore what is described as a simple pilgrim's hat, ornamented only with the medal of some saint in lead. Philip the Good of Burgundy was present at Louis's coronation, and indeed paid for it. He had been the protector of Louis in exile, and had accompanied him into France. In this journey the grand Burgundian cavaliers were astonished at the simple state of the King. Philip the Good is said to have possessed a tunic which cost 400,000 crowns. But the dress of the King and the horse on which he rode were not worth, said the disgusted cavaliers, twenty francs together.

With such a king administration was a real business.

He rose early, and worked hard. Fond of the country and of hunting (his only real recreation), he preferred Amboise to Paris, and spent as much time as he could in the pleasant country of the Loire. Yet he wasted no time in idleness; and probably no king of France did more travelling about his dominions, assiduously attending to the affairs of government in each locality. He had no favourites, but took his ministers from the middle class, men chosen for their ability and for their serviceableness to himself. Such a man was Olivier le Daim, his barber, who rose under Louis to high honours. His low-born counsellors were not popular in France, nor indeed was the King himself, agreeable and fond of conversation as he usually was; he was a terrible enemy, sending men without compunction to the gallows, or to a cage in some loathsome dungeon. But the common people liked his firm and orderly government.

Louis's first important public act was to pay over to Philip the Good of Burgundy the 400,000 gold crowns stipulated in the Treaty of Arras (1435), and to claim in return the Somme towns. Philip had to give up the towns, so France was greatly strengthened, strategically, towards the north-east. The task of consolidating the kingdom had been well begun. But before he could go further Louis was faced with a civil war.

Guerre du Bien Public.

This was 'the War of the Public Good', a rising of nobles, aided by Charles, Count of Charolais, the son and heir of Philip of Burgundy. The nobles and Charles formed a league, and demanded that the Government should be reformed, that the Estates General should be summoned, and that the taxes should be lightened. There was much to be said for these demands, but it is known that the intentions of the leaguers went much further; that they aimed at getting control of the

finances and the army of the kingdom. Had they been successful the power of the Crown would have disappeared, and France would have been divided again among great feudatories.

The great nobles almost to a man were in arms against the King. Gaston, the Count of Foix, remained faithful in the south, but Louis's own brother, the Duke of Berry, was among the rebels. The almost independent Duke of Brittany was against him, and Charles of Charolais brought Burgundian troops to the leaguers. The small country gentlemen on the whole supported Louis, the clergy and townspeople tried to avoid taking sides. Paris as a whole was faithful to the King, though it contained some very disaffected elements.

Louis had the royal troops, and showed himself to be a capable and cool soldier. He met the Burgundians and leaguers, who were making for Paris, at Montlhéry on July 16, 1465, and a battle was fought in which both sides claimed the victory, but which for the moment prevented the leaguers from advancing on the capital. Early in August, however, Louis went to Normandy to collect men and provisions, as the forces of the Public Weal were keeping Paris shut off from many of its sources of supply in the country. While he was absent the capital was menaced by the leaguers, but the Prévôt des Marchands, Henri de Livres, kept it for the King. On August 29 Louis re-entered Paris, with abundance 1465.
of supplies of men and provisions, and the War of the Public Good came to an end. Peace was made at Conflans in October. The leaguers, who were still very strong in the country, received what they really wanted, possessions and privileges, for, as Philip de Comines said, the public good was converted into private advantage. The Duke of Berry, Louis's brother, was given Normandy

as an appanage, and Charles of Charolais got back the Somme towns. The process of consolidating France had to be begun over again.

Louis XI and Charles the Bold.

The next eleven years of Louis's reign were to a large extent a contest between him and Charles the Bold of Burgundy. The Treaty of Conflans did not give peace for long. Louis took advantage of disputes between the late confederates to take Normandy back from the Duke of Berry, and to stir up risings against the Burgundian power in the Somme towns and in Liége. When Charles the Bold succeeded his father Philip the Good, who died on June 15, 1467, he was ready to fight it out again with the French King. Louis was fortunate in being able to give all his attention to France. He was not misled by tempting offers to take part in the wars between the Italian states; and Edward IV of England, having not quite got rid of the Wars of the Roses, was in no condition to trouble him.

July 3, 1468.

In 1468 Charles strengthened his position by marrying Margaret, sister of Edward IV. In October King Louis came to Péronne, which belonged to Charles, to treat of

Oct. 11.

the questions at issue between them. While they were discussing matters news came of a great rising in Liége (graphically described by Scott in *Quentin Durward*), and Charles, who with reason suspected Louis of having instigated the revolt, kept the King a prisoner. Louis was not released till he had signed the Treaty of Péronne, granting important privileges to Charles: the chief courts of Flanders were no longer to be subject to appeal to the Parlement de Paris. Louis kept his presence of mind throughout, and got better terms than might have been expected. He showed no ill feeling, and went with Charles against the unfortunate Liégeois, whose city was taken and sacked. After the town had

been stormed, Comines says, 'the King and the Duke were very merry together'. Louis had betrayed the Liégeois. He was only waiting for his chance against Charles the Bold.

The Treaty of Péronne proved to be no advantage to Charles, for Louis paid little attention to it when he got back to his own kingdom. So Charles tried to make a combination against him with England. But Louis was very skilful. He took up the cause of the deposed Henry VI, and reconciled the enemies, Queen Margaret of England and the Yorkist Earl of Warwick (both of whom had fled at a different time to France). Warwick returned to England with a well-equipped force. Edward IV had to fly the kingdom, and Henry VI was brought out Sept. 1470. of the Tower of London and restored. But the restored Lancastrian Government did not last long. Edward IV found a safe refuge with Charles the Bold, and in March 1471 invaded the north of England with Burgundian help. Two short campaigns, with the battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury, secured the English crown again for the Yorkist House. In 1475 Charles arranged a counter-design against France. Edward IV was to invade France through Calais, while Charles was to co-operate from Flanders. But Louis bought off the English king, who seems to have invaded France only for that purpose. The two monarchs had an interview at Picquigny on the Somme, and Edward IV was promised 75,000 crowns down, and an annual pension of 50,000 crowns, obligations which Louis was careful to pay punctually. Charles, in spite of successes in Lorraine and Alsace, had failed to induce the Emperor Frederick III to make (1473.) him independent of France by the grant of a crown. Cheated out of his support by England he became involved in contests, from the north-east of France,

where Louis XI gave him no rest, to the mountains of Switzerland. When he died before Nancy on January 5, 1477, Louis seized his duchy of Burgundy. The greater part of the Burgundian dominions were absorbed by the Habsburg House.

The fate of the Burgundian dominions.

Charles the Bold and his great scheme for a Middle Kingdom had been ruined by the military prowess of the Swiss, and by the political craft of Louis XI, who turned aside his allies and raised enemies for him on all sides. Two days after Charles's death at Nancy Louis took measures to occupy the Duchy of Burgundy and the Free County. Boulogne, which was a fief held by Charles, was also seized, as were the Somme towns, Péronne, Montdidier, Roye, St. Quentin. The rest of the Burgundian dominions were only saved for the Princess Mary with difficulty, whose long talked of marriage with Maximilian of Habsburg was at last completed on August 19, 1477. It was Louis's haste to annex the Burgundian dominions which had precipitated the marriage. This was his only serious mistake, but it was a great one. It began the European predominance of the House of Habsburg, and was said by Louis XV to be 'the origin of all our wars'. Yet when Louis XI died on August 30, 1483, in the castle which he had built at Plessis-les-Tours, he had done a great work in consolidating France. Philip de Comines had the greatest admiration for him; 'he seemed born', he says, 'for universal monarchy, rather than to govern a single kingdom'. Comines also gives his opinion that Louis was not a happy man: 'I believe from his infancy to his death, his whole life was nothing but one continued scene of troubles and fatigues; and I am of opinion that, if all the days of his life were computed in which his pleasures outweighed his pain, they would be found so

Death of Louis XI.

few that there would be twenty mournful ones to one pleasant.'

Charles VIII.

The reign of his son Charles VIII belongs to modern history, for his momentous invasion of Italy in 1494 is rightly considered to be the beginning of a new era, an era of national states and of wars for the balance of power. Before the invasion took place, while Charles was still a minor, under the regency of his capable sister Anne of Beaujeu, the work of Louis XI was as it were completed, by the marriage of the young Charles to the Duchess Anne of Brittany, the daughter and heiress of Francis II, the last duke. With this marriage, which neither Ferdinand of Spain, Maximilian, nor Henry VII of England could prevent, Brittany became an integral part of the kingdom of France. France took its place at once as one of the most solid and powerful kingdoms of Western Europe.

1490.

Italy. The Popes.

In the last fifty years of the fifteenth century the Roman papacy, which had survived schisms and defeated the controlling power of Councils, came gradually to assume a worldly character. This helped to bring on the reaction known as the Protestant Reformation. Pope Nicholas V was a good man, and nothing but praise is due to him for his interest in learning, in 'humanism', in the study of classical literature and the copying of classical manuscripts. His successor Calixtus III was more of a politician than Nicholas. The Cardinal Alphonso Borgia, as he was called before his election as Pope, owed his rise chiefly to the influence of the great Alphonso, King of Aragon and Naples. As Pope he was by no means destitute of public spirit, and worked hard to arouse Western Europe to a Crusade against the Turks, but without effect. His chief fault was nepotism, the promotion of members of his own family,

1447–55.

1455–8.

of whom the best known was Roderigo Borgia, who became a Cardinal and afterwards was infamous as Pope Alexander VI.

Calixtus III was succeeded by a purely worldly person, the famous scholar, man of letters, and historian, Aeneas
1455–64. Sylvius Piccolomini, Pope Pius II. His private morals, judged by the standard of laymen of the day, were not bad; he was simply a cultivated scholar of the Renaissance, without religious devotion. Had he kept to the career of a layman, holding positions of trust at the court of Frederick III, or at the papal court, he would have left an honourable name. He too as Pope tried to induce the Western powers to undertake a Crusade to
1464–71. regain Constantinople. Paul II, Pietro Barbo, was a Venetian, whose reign as Pope showed perhaps a slight improvement. Though not himself particularly learned he favoured learning, and is said to have introduced printing into Rome, a bold step in a church which aspires to keep strict control of the intellectual pursuits of its members.

1471–84. With Sixtus IV the policy of the Papacy became really worldly. A Franciscan, belonging to a poor Ligurian family of nobles, the della Rovere, he lent his efforts, not unsuccessfully, to making them one of the greatest houses in Italy. Under him Rome became the magnificent centre of the arts, and the beautiful Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, and the still splendid music in the papal choir prove the practical value of his interest. Yet he was a political intriguer who set the cities of Italy, Florence, Milan, Venice by the ears, and provoked wars. He undoubtedly knew beforehand about the conspiracy of the Pazzi, if he did not actually abet his nephew, the Cardinal Riario, to conspire to murder Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici. Yet all scholars

must respect his interest in learning, and especially the priceless boon of the Vatican Library, which he founded.

Innocent VIII is the last before the great Borgia pope—great for his talents and his vices—known as Alexander VI. Innocent, Giovanni Battista Cibo, was a Neapolitan. Before he took orders he had been the father of a large family, whom he promoted in every way after he became Pope. His court was corrupt, yet not so flagrantly so as that of Alexander VI. It was to the capable Cardinal Roderigo Borgia that he gave his confidence, and so he must be held partly responsible for this man's accession as Pope. 1484-92.

Alexander VI was the worst in character of the Renaissance popes, though not perhaps the most secular. He was born in 1431, near the city of Valencia in Spain. Under his uncle Pope Calixtus III he was promoted to be a Cardinal, and showed considerable administrative ability. His life, however, was very worldly, and as Cardinal he lived the life of a married man. This was not considered a small offence even at the worldly Curia at Rome; it brought down upon him the censure of the sensible though by no means particularly religious Pius II. Nevertheless, on the death of Innocent VIII, the Cardinal Roderigo Borgia, largely by bribery it is said, prevailed upon the venal Cardinals to elect him Pope, on August 10, 1492. One of his earliest acts was to make his second son, Cesare, then aged sixteen, Archbishop of Valencia, a see which Alexander VI had himself held. This Pope had certainly a real fondness for his own family, and devoted his time and the resources of the Papacy to making them wealthy princes. The career of the able and energetic Cesare, the original of Machiavelli's Prince, and of the beautiful Lucrezia Borgia, belong to another period, when the baleful

influence of Alexander VI was still felt. Under him the chief occupations of the papal *entourage* and of the Pope himself were hunting in the Campagna, dancing, and the theatre; the dancers and the actors were of the same character as the stage players of Madrid in the seventeenth century, as described in Le Sage's novel, *Gil Blas*.

The historian Gibbon, in the final chapter of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, relates how the learned Poggio, in the time of Pope Eugenius IV, ascended the Capitoline Hill with a friend; how they

'reposed themselves among the ruins of columns and temples; and viewed from that commanding spot the wide and various prospect of desolation. The place and object gave ample scope for moralising on the vicissitudes of fortune, which spares neither man, nor the proudest of his works, which buries empires and cities in a common grave; and it was agreed that in proportion to her former greatness the fall of Rome was the more awful and deplorable'.[1]

Such were the thoughts which the spectacle of Mediaeval Rome inspired in the learned Poggio. Yet by the time of Pope Alexander VI a new Rome had begun to arise, a Rome less religious indeed than that of the best period of the Middle Ages, but a city whose splendid palaces and churches would bear comparison with the majestic relics of ancient days. It was the Rome of the secular popes. The fabric of the Eternal City grew more splendid, while the population of city and country deteriorated.

'The improvements of Rome, since the fifteenth century, have not been the spontaneous produce of freedom and industry. . . . The beauty and splendour of the modern city may be ascribed to the abuses of the

[1] Gibbon, chap. lxxi.

government and to the influence of superstition. Each reign (the exceptions are rare) has been marked by the rapid elevation of a new family, enriched by the childless pontiff, at the expense of the church and country. The palaces of these fortunate nephews are the most costly monuments of elegance and servitude; the perfect arts of architecture, painting, and sculpture have been prostituted in their service, and their galleries and gardens are decorated with the most precious works of antiquity, which taste or vanity has prompted them to collect. The ecclesiastical revenues were more decently employed by the Popes themselves in the pomp of the Catholic worship; but it is superfluous to enumerate their pious foundations of altars, chapels, and churches, since these lesser stars are eclipsed by the sun of the Vatican, by the dome of St. Peter, the most glorious structure that ever has been applied to the use of religion. The fame of Julius II, Leo X, and Sixtus V is accompanied by the superior merit of Bramante and Fontana, of Raphael and Michaelangelo.'[1]

It is on the threshold of the century of these popes and artists that our period closes; so here we must take leave of that immortal city, of which the memories and the beauty have never ceased to attract, in any age, 'the remote, and once savage countries of the North'.[2]

The invention of printing by Gutenberg at Mainz in 1447 is, if not the actual ending of the Middle Ages, at any rate the event which made certain the speedy dropping of the curtain upon that fascinating stage. It was, nevertheless, the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII which may be taken as the actual opening of modern history, and the close of the Middle Ages. The forty years before that event were years, not by any means of unbroken peace, but of comparative quiet. Invention of printing. 1494.

In Milan the great captain of condottieri, Francesco Sforza, founded a dynasty, lasting the usual three Milan.

[1] Gibbon, chap. lxxi. [2] Ib. ad fin.

generations which, according to the old Greek historian Herodotus, is the longest period of most tyrant houses. He died in 1466, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Galeazzo Sforza, a wicked man who was assassinated in December 1476, outside the doors of St. Stephen's Church. He left a young son, Gian Galeazzo Maria, who became Duke of Milan, under the regency of his uncle Lodovico Sforza, 'il Moro', so called because of his swarthy complexion. Lodovico was ambitious to keep his rule in Milan, and perhaps himself ultimately to become Duke. For this reason he made friends with Lorenzo de' Medici, the splendid tyrant of Florence, and so, Milan and Florence being friendly, the north of Italy was at peace. When Lorenzo died in 1492 the aspect of affairs changed. His son Pietro continued the alliance with King Ferrante of Naples. Ferrante's granddaughter was married to the young Duke of Milan, Gian Galeazzo. Lodovico therefore began to fear that the King of Naples and the Medici of Florence might intervene in Milan to dispossess him of his power over the young Duke. To prevent this he suggested that Charles VIII of France, who had a hereditary claim on Naples through the house of Lorraine-Anjou, should invade that kingdom. So there came about the momentous invasion of Italy by Charles in 1494, in the course of which the Duke Gian Galeazzo of Milan died in the Castle of Pavia, poisoned, it was said, by his uncle. Gian's death enabled Lodovico himself to become Duke of Milan. His ambition and his action in bringing the French into Italy were ultimately fatal to himself, as they were to the peace of Italy. For the first fifty years of the next century the fair land of the Milanese was the battle-ground of French and Spaniards. Lodovico il Moro ended his life a prisoner in 1510, in the gloomy castle of Loches in Touraine.

The dynasty of the banker-princes, the Medici, was more fortunate than that of the Sforza, and lasted till 1737. It was not till 1570 that they secured the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany from Pius V, but they had for long held, in fact, the lordship of Florence which was not theirs by law. Under Lorenzo de' Medici Florence became the home of the arts: poets, sculptors, and painters dined at his table, and were maintained by his patronage. His alliance with Ferrante of Naples and Lodovico Sforza, the regent of Milan, maintained a balance of power in Italy, and kept the peace—a condition of affairs to which the tyrants by reason of their unstable power were naturally inclined. The art of painting in oils was now approaching its full and glorious development. Leonardo, a universal genius, who, like his younger contemporary Michaelangelo, has left works, executed with singular freedom and beauty, in several arts, studied in Florence under the master Verrocchio from 1470 to 1477, and for four more years worked there on his own account. In 1483 he was invited by Lodovico Sforza to Milan. His works, as they have come down to us, are few, compared with those of the great men who were to follow, of the Florentine school like Michaelangelo, of the Roman school like Raphael, of the Venetian like Veronese. His fresco, the 'Last Supper', has established the type of Christ's face for all time, and is the supreme work of religious feeling, just as his picture and portrait of La Gioconda, Monna Lisa, is the supreme work of pagan beauty, and perhaps the greatest expression of the Renaissance. The distinguished essayist and art critic thus interprets Monna Lisa:

Florence.

Italian Art.

1497.

'The presence that thus rose so strangely beside the waters is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire. Hers is the head upon

which all "the ends of the world are come", and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed! All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded there, in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the reverie of the Middle Age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants; and, as Leda was the Mother of Helen of Troy, and, as St. Anne, the mother of Mary; and all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes and lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands.'[1]

The peaceful time of Lorenzo de' Medici was a period of great comfort and prosperity for the north of Italy. The towns were places of great trade and manufacture; the world's commerce still flowed through the well-known
1487. channels, till Bartholomew Diaz discovered the ocean-way to India by the Cape of Good Hope. The tenants on the estates round the Italian cities, cultivating the ground, and retaining, according to a custom that still exists, half the produce of the soil, prospered with the spread of irrigation and with the peace under which the land gave forth its increase. It was in the country-side

[1] Pater, *Renaissance* (Essay, Leonardo da Vinci), edition 1900, p. 124.

that the most wholesome life was found, it was out of country villages that many of the greatest men came. The cities were worldly; in Florence the life of pleasure and often of vice was so great as to provoke a reaction, which is like a last dying effort of the Mediaeval Ages of Faith.

The Dominicans of San Marco.

Dominicans had been established in the church and convent of San Marco, in the year 1436, to set an example of a strict rule of life. Within fifty years the house had become famous for two of the most spiritually minded men of the Middle Ages, Giovanni da Fiesole, better known as Fra Angelico, and Girolamo Savonarola.

Fra Angelico, 1387–1455.

Fra Angelico's pictures, of which very few examples are to be found outside Italy, are justly considered to be the highest form of 'Catholic' art. Deeply religious, mystical, nervous, he had spiritual experiences unlike those of common men. Like Joan of Arc, in his long meditations he had trances and visions, and the spiritual faces and forms which appeared to him in these visions he faithfully represented on his canvas. His work is of great beauty, quiet and refined, rather than strong. In his pictures of Christ, the Virgin, St. Dominic there is not the gloom and asceticism, almost harshness, of the later Spanish religious painters, but an expression of humility, thoughtfulness, repose that appeal to men of every nationality and belief.

Savonarola.

The other great brother of San Marco, the Friar Girolamo Savonarola, moved with the worldliness of the people of Florence, began his preaching in 1489. The moral laxity of every class stirred him to wrath, and his tremendous appeals gained many followers. Like Arnold of Brescia, 350 years before, he was a zealot, an ascetic, a republican. The Medici, in Savonarola's view, had destroyed the freedom of Florence and corrupted

its life. His last words to the dying Lorenzo in 1492 were 'Wilt thou also restore Florence to liberty, and to the enjoyment of her popular government as a free commonwealth?' Lorenzo, who had confessed his sins to the Friar and affirmed his 'perfect faith', at this last question, turned his face away and said no more. Charles VIII, on his way to Naples, entered Florence in 1494, after the flight of Pietro de' Medici who was the ally of Naples. The Republic was re-established, and Charles was welcomed by Savonarola as the messenger of God. The Friar became the spiritual, practically the temporal, leader of the Republic: his followers, the *piagnoni*, the weepers, brought their ornaments and trifles, their loose novels, *Morgante Maggiore* and the *Decameron*, and made public bonfires of them. Our Lord was proclaimed King of Florence, and the curious cry of 'Viva Cristo!' was heard through the streets. Yet his asceticism, his republicanism joined against him both the Pope Alexander VI and those who still hoped to make Florence either an oligarchy or a tyranny. His exalted followers, the shallow converts of a neurotic movement, not more moral after their conversion than before, gained little respect. Girolamo, himself a saintly man, was accused of heresy by the Franciscans, jealous, as always, of their Dominican rivals. On May 23, after having been put to the torture, he was hung as a heretic. The influence of Savonarola, local and transitory though it was, is yet like a ripple from those far away waves of emotion, which in the twelfth century had led some hundreds of thousands of men from Western Europe to die in the deserts of Syria.

The period of discoveries.

With the discovery of the West Indian Islands in 1492 by Columbus a new world began to be opened up to the knowledge of the peoples of Western Europe, the

curtain which had screened the Middle Ages was rolled aside, and the ample stage of the modern world's history appeared. Yet geographical discovery was not a new thing in 1492; for 200 years before men of Western Europe had been groping, as it were, in new lands, and along strange paths of the sea. Many of the maritime discoveries of the fifteenth century were in fact rediscoveries, as, for instance, the occupation of the island of Grand Canary by the men of Prince Henry of Portugal in 1415, of the Azores in 1431. These islands had previously been reached by Spanish and Genoese navigators; the continent of America itself had been visited by Norwegian or Icelandic men in the tenth century, but most of them, if not all, died of starvation there, and their deeds became only a vague memory.

The ancient Greeks were busy mariners, but they followed the coast. The men of Amalfi in the eleventh and twelfth centuries were great sailors, and used, at least in the later century, a species of floating compass. Some time before 1269 a more serviceable instrument, the pivoted compass, came into use, and men had something certain to rely on in launching themselves upon the great oceans.

Marco Polo.

Dangerous as it was, maritime travelling was safer than that by land. India and China had been visited overland from Europe in the Middle Ages, but the difficulties in the way of such enterprises were immense. The Venetian Marco Polo in 1270 and 1271 travelled by way of Syria and the Desert of Gobi to the Great Wall of China, and for three years was governor of Yangchow. Yet his descriptions, voluminous as they are, can have conveyed very little geographical knowledge to the people of his time. Marco Polo missed his chance. He might have written one of the most interesting books

in the world. Instead it is really a commonplace book. He tells a good deal, real and legendary, about the history of the countries which he visited, and about the customs of the peoples. But there are no details of the routes which he followed, practically no descriptions of individuals or their manners, above all no account of what one might call the daily life of the traveller. Had Marco Polo related how he journeyed, where he slept, what he got to eat and drink, how he paid for it, what the roads, tracks, bridges were like, what sort of dwellings the people had, how they were dressed, how they treated their animals, with other such details, his work would have been priceless. We could do without the stories of Prester John and Genghis Khan. But the reader never finds anything he wants to find. Mankind has lost a great chance of knowing about Central Asia and its peoples at the end of the thirteenth century. Even Tacitus, who had not been to Germany, tells us infinitely more about the Germans than Marco Polo does about the people among whom he personally travelled.

Instances of how not to write a book of travel might be taken almost broadcast from Marco Polo's work: for instance, 'Messer Maffeo and Messer Marco Polo dwelt a whole year in this city when on a mission'.[1] This is all he has to say about a whole year spent in the city of Kanschau in Persia, about the year 1271. Or, again:

'Now that I have told you of those scoundrels [banditti] and their history, I must add the fact that Messer Marco Polo himself was all but caught by their bands in such darkness as that I have told you of; but as it pleased God, he got off and threw himself into a village that was hard by, called Conosalmi. Howbeit he lost his whole company except seven persons who escaped along with

[1] *Travels of Marco Polo*, edited by Yule (1871), p. 199.

him. The rest were caught and some of them sold, some put to death.'[1]

What a meagre account—nothing about the look or arms of the banditti, or how Marco Polo escaped, how the villagers received him, what the village looked like.

The traveller by land is dependent upon the districts through which he travels for his personal safety, and for his food and drink. His progress is slow and painful, his outlook limited by the valleys, hills, woods, or even bushes and grass, by which he is surrounded. The mariner travels in a little world of his own: he has food and drink for months in the hold of his ship, he sails the ocean freely, without let or hindrance, other than the contrary or violent winds, which his skill soon learns to meet. In his frail ship he risks his life every moment against the stupendous force of wind and wave, yet his chances of going far, for thousands of miles, in the direction he has chosen, have always been greater than the chances of the landbound traveller, amid trackless wastes, or unknown or hostile people.

The little country of Portugal, looking westward, washed along its whole length by the waves of the Atlantic, held the greatest maritime nation of the later Middle Ages. To India on the East, to Brazil on the West, the Portuguese stretched out their hands, and were the first to make a great overseas empire.

Prince Henry the Navigator.

Prince Henry of Portugal may be called the father of modern oceanic enterprise. He was born in 1394, the third son of King John I of Portugal and Philippa, daughter of the English John of Gaunt. In 1415 he served at the capture of Ceuta, on the north coast of Africa, opposite Gibraltar. There he heard stories of a great African potentate in the interior, and his mind

[1] *Travels of Marco Polo*, p. 93.

was fired with the romance of discovery. In 1419 his father made him govenor of the Algarve, the southern province of Portugal which inclines towards the Atlantic. He took up his residence at Sagres, near Cape St. Vincent, where he founded an observatory and worked upon maps, without which no sure geographical knowledge can be accumulated, no permanent advances made. The expeditions which he planned, organized, and sent out till his death at Sagres in 1460, opened up the Canary Islands (in a voyage conducted by Henry in person), Cape Verde, the Azores, and the West African coast.

> Thus fared we opening those wastes of tide,
> No generation openèd before;
> Sighting new islands and new airs we hied,
> Which generous Henry had the heart to explore:
> Past Mauritanian hills and homes we plied,
> The realms Antaeus ruled in times of yore,
> Leaning to larboard on our dexter hand
> Lay nothing surer than suspected land.[1]

In 1441 gold dust and negro slaves were first brought from the 'Guinea' coast.

The traditions of the school of mariners whom Prince Henry trained were continued by Bartholomew Diaz, Vasco da Gama, Pedro Alvarez Cabral. Diaz had made voyages to the Gold Coast before his famous expedition in 1487. It was this expedition, however, which clearly showed the way to India. As he sailed along the coast of West Africa he erected stone or wooden columns, marking the possessions of imperial Portugal: at Diaz Point, for instance, south of Lüderitz Bay, where fragments of his column may still be seen. The growing dismay of his crew forced him to return, but not before

[1] Camoëns, *Lusiad* (1572), canto v, stanza 4 (translation Burton).

he had rounded Cabo Tormentorio,[1] and proved the eastward trend of the land. The stormy cape became the hopeful one, Cabo de Boa Esperança, Good Hope. It was off the Cape he himself had discovered that Bartholomew Diaz was lost at sea, in the squadron which Cabral was taking to India. 1488.

Diaz showed the way to this promised land: it was Vasco da Gama who entered into it, rounding the Cape in October 1497, and landing at Calicut in May 1498. He died in 1524, viceroy of the splendid province of Goa, where the flag of Portugal still flies. Twenty-three years before, Admiral Cabral had landed in South America, and founded a great empire in Brazil.

Thus, with Spain, for whom the great Genoese Columbus opened up America in 1492, Portugal shared the New World. Year after year their *conquistadores* crossed the seas, strong, decisive men, forming new provinces and kingdoms. Portugal, the smaller nation, could not bear to lose so many of its most ardent, its finest men: the next century saw its decline. Spain was drained by endless wars in foreign fields: the Dutch and the English began to reap where Portugal and Spain had sown. England, turning her back on the barren wars in France, began to follow the sea in its most distant paths: paths which will be her ruin if she cease to follow. Columbus.

In the Middle Ages men were rigidly circumscribed, not so much in their movements—for the greater number of men must always be stationary in their district or country—but in their outlook. The bulk of the things that exist were to mankind a closed book. It was the invention and use of printing which enabled each man to multiply his experiences to an infinite extent. With books and his own imagination a man can live in every The end of the Middle Ages. 1447.

[1] So called in Camoëns, *Lusiad*, canto v, stanza 50.

place and climate. He can know and learn, ponder on the pages of philosophy, and study the roll of history. In addition to the wholesome activities of his own district and occupation he has all the pleasures and activities of the mind. Every one did not learn to read the printed book after 1447, but the Renaissance, with its enthusiasm for education, and the Reformation, which spread the use of the Bible, increased the practice of reading. Besides this the Reformation established the right and duty of every man to think and judge for himself, using the great books of the world on which to form his judgement. The day of intellectual wealth and freedom had come. In the world of books every man is his own master and can call that world his own. And he has always by him 'what is the sweetest and most consoling thing in the world, recommended by sages as the sovereign remedy for ills, I mean the sincere love of letters and the innocent charm of the Muses'.[1]

[1]Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, M. de Latouche, ad fin.

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